

*I'll bet he even bores the statues...*

Goldi's mind raced with boredom as she sat, staring down at the sheets of paper in front of her. As her thumb rubbed across the corner of the thick stack of papers the student still did not believe what she had gotten herself into.

“Now, Ms. Dawn, you're certain you understand the process?” Professor Appleton droned on, looking over the rims of his tiny glasses at the stack of papers in Goldi's hands. The young woman sighed and pushed herself up from the desk and turned to the museum curator.

“Yes, sir, I understand,” she said through gritted teeth, “A complete check of all pieces in storage.”

“Excellent,” the round, bespectacled man smiled, rolling up some of his own papers and placing them within his tweed jacket, “I'll be back in the morning – I expect to find the completed checklist upon my desk.”

“Yes, Professor Appleton,” Goldi gritted again, looking up with a big smile on her face, her eyelashes batting. Appleton returned an awkward grin, stumbled a few times, and finally left the room.

*I can't believe I was planning on sleeping with that guy...* thought the brunette coed, turning back to the stack on the desk and giving a long sigh.

As a sophomore at Lyon State University, Goldi had learned many things over the course of her previous year; she didn't like studying. Or working. Or having to put out effort.

There were other things she'd rather put out.

Which is why when the position for curator's assistant reopened Goldi thanked her lucky stars. She was in Professor Appleton's Euro History course, and she was not doing well. Actually, “not doing well” was the positive way of describing for status. Goldi had hoped that the assistant's position would let her achieve some other types of positions with the aging man; positions that could be photographed and used for blackmail.

However, no matter how many skimpy, revealing, or slut-tastic outfits Goldi wore – like the one this evening with it's low cut tank top that showed off what passed as her breasts, a mini skirt to accentuate her acceptable ass, and fuck-me heels – ol' Appleton never seemed to bite at the forbidden fruit. Goldi had quickly realized that her attempts to seduce Appleton had only succeeded in making her have to work hard at *two* different things; improving her acumen in class *and* excelling as an assistant. But since class improvement wasn't happening, getting him to like her as an assistant was now the only hope of passing.

“Fucking stupid Tina,” Goldi muttered as she picked up the ream of paper and started towards the first of the museum's many storage rooms, “Where the hell are you?”

Tina Carson had been the curator's assistant previously. She and Goldi had original competed for the position, and Tina won out. Goldi had been *so* pissed at her, but then news came that Tina had gone missing. When the job reopened after a few weeks Tina was quick to jump on the chance. Rechecking the museum's entire inventory was one of the projects Tina had never finished before disappearing, and now it was up to Goldi to complete.

*Couldn't you have gone missing just one week later?*

Brushing back her dark shoulder length hair, Goldi switched on the light for Storage Room A.

The electric tubes hummed and slowly flickered on overhead, illuminating the six shelving units completely packed with random items. Even more shelves and some larger items lined the walls. Jars, tablets, metal items, books...the University Museum had collected its share of crap over the years – six storage rooms worth of it. Letting out yet another sigh as she surveyed the room, Goldi didn't think she was going to finish in time to even make it late to the Delta party, let alone before Appleton got back in the morning.

“Fuck you, Tina...” Goldi muttered again as she flipped through the top few sheets of the checklist and began taking stock of the room.

It took half an hour before Goldi had finished the first two shelving units, and she was starting to get sleeping by the time she got to the third. Normally she was one or two shots into a party by now, supplementing everything with energy drinks. Goldi wasn't used to her body being sober at this time of night.

Trying to shake off the sleepies as she turned to the third set of shelves, Goldi was able to check off quite a few items before having to stop. Sitting at the bottom of the shelves on the floor, practically hidden underneath the bottom shelf, was a brass oil lamp. Furrowing her brow and flipping through about ten pages before giving up, Goldi quickly realized that the lamp was not listed as part of this room's items. Placing the papers on the shelf Goldi picked up the lamp and examined it.

It was about as stereotypical as an Eastern-style oil lamp could be. The brass was aged, the handle looped decoratively, and it had a small lid which would not budge. As she examined it Goldi could not help but laugh at herself.

“Haha, just what I need, a magic lamp!” Goldi muttered, rubbing the side of it, “C'mon, let's see the-”

Suddenly the lamp began to glow from within. Before Goldi could react she could feel a force push out of it, causing her to drop the metal ornament. As it clattered onto the floor something was flowing out of the open end of the lamp. As the brunette watched, too surprised to do anything, two hands and arms stretched out of the spout, following by a head with red hair. More and more of a human body squeezed out, until the partial form of a nude woman hung in the air. The body was mostly just a torso that curved down to the hips. But instead of legs the body smoothed together into a tail that continued down and inside the lamp.

Goldi just stared. The red haired being was quite pretty. Round apple sized breasts hung from her chest, her ass was peach-shaped, and her skin a pale and freckled masterpiece. Lacking legs did not mean the being had no sex – a tiny tuft of curly red hair rested above a vagina that nestled in where a normal crotch would have been, although pushed out slightly in form with the undulating tail. Finally the being seemed to stretch out, lifting up its head and looking around.

“My God, it's good to be out of there...”

“Holly shit...Tina?”

The being's head snapped around and stared at Goldi, and for a moment they locked eyes in silence.

“Goldi?”

“Yeah, is that really you, Tina?”

Goldi could not believe it. Floating in front of her was Tina Carson...although Goldi didn't

remember the mousy Tina being so voluptuous.

“Yeah, it's me...” Tina sighed, floating towards Goldi. Her fleshy tail never left the lamp, instead stretching with her as she moved, “I got turned into a genie.”

“What?”

Tina didn't seem to care that she was naked and floated right up to Goldi.

“I was doing the museum cataloging, and when I got about this far I found a strange old book that wasn't on the list. It had a jewel on the front and looked ancient. When I opened the book all the pages had illustrations of weird creatures. At first I didn't think I knew what language it was written in, but one page seemed legible and I read it, which was a mistake...”

Tina had started to examine herself while she spoke and now seemed to be recognizing the sexy alterations to her figure. Goldi watched Tina run her hands over her body as she explored her new curves. Not interested in watching a girl – or genie – feel themselves up, Goldi spoke up.

“Okay, so it was a mistake...why?”

“Oh, well, it summoned the creature that was drawn on that page and it demanded I make a request of her.”

“Her? A request?”

“Yeah,” Tina sighed, floating over to one of the shelves and resting her ass against it, “Apparently the book was a directory of summonable demonesses. She called herself...what was it...Gortha of the Captive Gift Bearers.”

“It...she spoke English?”

“I think she just spoke and I understood...” Tina continued, looking up and down her smooth arms, “Anyway, it told me to make a request to improve my life, and of course I asked to be sexier. So I got that, and then she turned me into a genie.”

“How does that logic follow?”

“Apparently she was a very specific type of demoness...her only purpose was to turn people into genies. The only reason she had asked me anything was to find out what sort of limits to impose on me. So after telling me this – poof! Suddenly I'm a formless mass in darkness waiting for someone to rub my lamp,” Tina sighed, looking down with disappointment at what her genie tail was attached to.

“So you're telling me that you've been missing because a demon-”

“Demoness.”

“Whatever...because you summoned something from a book and it turned you into a genie.”

“That's right.”

“Where's the book?”

“Don't know,” Tina answered, looking around the room, “It should be right around here but I don't see it.”

“Ah,” Goldi murmured. As calm as she had been acting she had only just now been able to truly wrap her head around everything. As it all clicked into place, Goldi looked Tina in the eye and asked, “So, do I get three wishes?”

Tina sighed.

“Yes...but my limits are that the wishes can only be about making changes to your body. The only other wish I can grant is to return myself to normal, so if you could do that...”

“But I get three, right?” Goldi interrupted, “So I could, like, free you on the third wish...if I wanted.”

Tina's eyes narrowed and she floated up and crossed her arms.

“Yes...you could. But it would be safer if-”

“Well, first, I wish I was sexier than *you*.”

Goldi had just blurted that one out. Staring at Tina, her voluptuous body on display, Goldi was very jealous. And she couldn't allow that. Tina had always been the girl Goldi had mocked, the girl Goldi used to gauge how much better she was. Whatever happened, Goldi always smiled knowing that she was more attractive than this flat and friendless sap. But now that had changed and it needed to be corrected. As the wish left Goldi's lips, Tina seemed to sink her a head a bit. Under her breath she sighed, “Granted...”

Goldi immediately felt a pressure in her chest. Looking down into the low cut of the tank top, the waifish girl gasped as her body seemed to tighten. Bringing her hands up to her wonder-bra-enhance cleavage, Goldi clutched at herself as breathing became difficult.

“What...have you done...to me?” Goldi heaved, tearing at her shirt in an attempt to relieve the pressure.

“What you asked. I've commanded your body to reform. I'm sorry if it's uncomfortable, this is my first time, after all,” Tina replied, a small smile indicating that perhaps she was not being entirely truthful.

Desperately pulling her tank top and bra off over her head, Goldi could also feel the pressure spreading to her hips. Throwing her shirt aside and taking deep breaths, Goldi looked down as she watched her two modest breasts start to grow. She could feel the expansion of flesh across her ribcage; a warm sensation that was now transitioning her from panic to pleasure. It was like her chest was filling with warm dough. Goldi's nipples, tiny pencil erasers before, were now nearly the size of finger tips. Her growing teats popped up and became quite hard as Goldi now began to revel in the changes taking place.

The pressure had also overtaken the brunette's hips and ass, but it hadn't effected her breathing which meant Goldi hadn't been as panicked to get her skirt and panties off. Now, as her ass started to round out and her hips became a little wider, Goldi could feel her panties riding up into her femininity and the band of her skirt getting very tight. The transmogrifying woman reveled at the feeling of the orange-size breasts now swinging from her ribs as she pushed her skirt and panties down her legs. Getting tangled in her heels Goldi pushed those off as well.

Now completely nude, Goldi closed her eyes and began to run her hands across her body, starting at her stubble-free legs and moving up to the transition into her new hourglass. Her long, smooth legs flowed into hips which were perfect for sexy sways and accentuating skirts, but not too large for her frame. Goldi's ass had bumped out a bit, giving her a slight bubble that retained a heart shape. Both of these curves rolled into a thinner waist that had contributed to Goldi's earlier breathing issues. Now able to take full and normal breaths again, Goldi could feel that the slight pouch of her

stomach had been smoothed away. As she ran her hands around her midsection she also felt that the patch of curly hair that had once sat just above her mons was also gone.

The area it once adorned was also starting to get quite wet.

Bringing her hands up the sides of her body to the most anticipated change, the brunette could very quickly sense the presence of her larger fleshy pillows. Moving her hands to the bottom curve of her breasts, Goldi's palms could no longer cover her formerly average tits. Now her hands could barely contain the grapefruits that grew from her ribcage.

Opening her eyes, Goldi looked down into an expanse of cleavage that would doom the girl from ever directly seeing her feet again. Running her hands up to her nipples, Goldi's hips bucked a little as she felt the very excited nubs that sat proudly at the far end of her boobs. Goldi fingertips could feel the texture of her aureola, which were the size of poker chips. Thimble sized nipples stood at the center, and as Goldi gently grazed them her knees went weak.

“Are you going to masturbate or set me free?”

Tina's scathing voice broke Goldi from her reverie and she looked up at the djinnified classmate. Tina's arms were crossed over her own epic boobs, and she had a bit of a scowl.

“You certainly made them...sensitive,” Goldi replied. It was not entirely a compliment. In addition to new clothes Goldi would have to get everything silk lined, which would not be cheap.

“Well, would you rather they were painful?” Tina retorted, letting a huff of air follow her statement.

“No,” Goldi responded, “And who says I have to free you, anyway?”

Surprise and terror washed over Tina's entire body.

“What? Why? Bu...because it's the right thing to do!” Tina exclaimed.

“Why? I didn't do this to you,” Goldi replied, motioning up and down at Tina's floating form, “Sounds like you were stupid and did this to yourself! Now you're a genie, and genies *grant* wishes, they don't demand them!”

“Goldi, please,” Tina cried, floating the the floor and holding up her hands to the sexified brunette, “This isn't right. It isn't fair. Do you know what it's like in that lamp? I'm nothing but a shapeless mass in there. But I'm a human being! I just want to get back to my old life!”

“Yeah, well, that's the other thing,” Goldi answered, stepping away from the tearing girl. For a moment Goldi was distracted by the bounce and sway of her new bountiful breasts, but she quickly brought her mind back to the subject at hand, “Your old life includes my new job. And while I hate it, I need it to have any shot at passing Appleton's class. So I'm not keen on letting you have a crack at it again.”

“Goldi, I don't need to take back-”

“Yeah, you say it now, but I couldn't trust you to not try,” Goldi interrupted, ceasing her pace around the room and stopping behind the downtrodden genie, “So if you don't mind, I have two more wishes I need to think of.”

“Fine,” Tina growled, disappointment had already transitioned to hopelessness, and now hopelessness easily moving to fury, “But mark my words – someday I'll be found by someone who *is* willing to free me. I have immortality on my side now! And when they do agree, I'll make sure they

send me back here so I can steal this job and be *certain* Professor Appleton sees just how conniving and useless you are to this museum!” By the end of her threat Tina had turned and was staring up at Goldi, fire burning in her eyes.

“Fine, bitch, I can fix that!” Goldi shouted, completely immune to any of the former human's intimidation as she got right up to Tina. Throwing out her arms and bouncing up onto the balls of her feet to improve her imposing stance Goldi gave a victorious grin and shouted, “I wish that it was quite clear how valuable and significant an addition I am to this museum!”

Tina smiled.

“Granted.”

The tone of Tina's voice infuriated Goldi, and she had every intention of throwing a finger in Tina's face and continuing her shouting when she realized her arms wouldn't move. Still outstretched, palms up, Goldi could not get them to respond. She also couldn't move her head – or even her eyes – to look and see what was wrong. Her entire body had frozen up in her position of challenge; arms out, palms open, feet planted firmly beneath her shoulders with just a bit of rise onto her toes. She had unconsciously pushed out her new chest, and all Goldi could still see of herself was the upper curve of her breasts and her outstretched hands.

“I suppose you're wondering what's happened to you, mmm?” Tina floated directly in front of Goldi's vision. The cursed bitch had her hands to her hips and a look of victory smeared across her face. Goldi wanted to scream at Tina but nothing responded to her commands. Even her breathing was becoming more shallow.

“I've actually decided to grant your second – and last, by the way – wish in parts.”

Goldi's anger was quickly melting into pure terror.

“You made a fairly specific wish that's allowed me a very broad interpretation. The first thing I've done is paralyzed your body. Your every-so-benevolent pose was practically perfect for what I have in mind, so I've kept you like that. I hope you liked it, you'll be in that position for quite some time...or all of it.”

*What have you done to me?* Goldi screamed in her head, uselessly.

“Now that I'm certain you're well balanced, I'm going to start the final part of your wish,” Tina said, waiving her hands down at Goldi's feet. Again the paralyzed woman tried to force her back, neck, eyes, *anything* to let her move and see what was happening, but nothing budged. A cold sensation had taken root in her toes, and Goldi could feel it start to crawl back across her foot, slipping over her heels and ankles and beginning to encroach up her legs.

“I'm not sure what this feels like to you – I hope *bad* – but the sensation you're feeling now is your body gradually being turned to gold.”

*Gold!* the frozen woman shrieked internally, *She's going to kill me!*

“I know it's trite because of your name, but I couldn't resist. Oh, and don't get any ideas of grandeur; you're not turning into pure gold. It's an alloy that will be strong enough to keep you from collapsing under your own weight. You're *very* lucky I was a science major. But you'll look like gold and be *mostly* gold, and in the end that's what counts, right?”

Goldi wasn't listening. The creeping sensation had crossed her knees, conquered most of her

thighs, and Goldi could sense it moving into her newly bare nether region. Because of how she had positioned herself, Goldi knew that whatever was happening to her femininity was in plain view of Tina.

“Oh, there goes your pussy...nothing but cold metal now...” Tina smiled. Goldi tried screaming again. The petrifying brunette realized that since the first wish had gotten her hot and horny before her body was paralyzed, Goldi's clit was now immortalized in its aroused state.

*I will kill you, I will kill you, I will kill you!* Goldi's mind shouted.

“I'm sure you have all sorts of interesting thoughts going on in there right now,” Tina sighed, pushing back Goldi's hair. The frozen woman could feel the transformation overtaking her naval, warm flesh cooling to polished yellow. “I would have loved to have heard what you have to say, but that would have allowed you to wish this away. And I figure, if I have to be trapped within a metal prison for the foreseeable future, why not you as well?”

Goldi could now feel her breasts being invaded by the gold. At the bottom of her peripheral vision she could see the tingling wave as it passed over the top curves of her formerly soft boobs. It was a smooth transition from skin to metal; just like one color fading to another. By now the wave had also enveloped her shoulders, and was metalizing down her arms to her hands as well. Which meant...

*Please undo this before it kills me!* Goldi begged internally, terrified as to how it would feel as her brain gradually succumbed to the lifeless substance. It was now Goldi suddenly realized she had stopped breathing; hopefully her life would be snuffed out as painlessly.

“Hold that smile...” Tina grinned as the sensation reached Goldi's chin, washed over her face, then cascaded down Goldi's hair. Goldi felt the tingling through all of it. Then it stopped.

But Goldi's mind didn't.

*What the fuck?* Goldi shouted to herself, *I'm still alive! Thank God, but-*

“By now you're probably wondering 'How am I still alive' and 'how can I still see?’” Tina grinned, hovering back from Goldi a few feet. It was then Goldi realized all her senses seemed to be intact, or at least sight and hearing. And she could still feel her feet against the floor, the weight of her incredibly heavy body being pulled by gravity.

“You see, I meant what I said when I wanted you to be trapped; trapped in your own body. I don't totally get this whole magic thing still, but I *think* I transmuted your *essence*, not your *being*. Which means that while your body is gold, that doesn't change what you started out as. I mean, other than being immobile, I guess...” Tina stopped talking and scratched her head, leaving Goldi's mind to helplessly real in panic. “The bottom line is, you're gold but you still have all the faculties of a human being, you just can't move. Because you're gold.”

*Fucking magic!* Goldi shouted, realizing that she could be stuck like this, a helpless prisoner of her own body, for all of time.

“So, unless I totally screwed up and killed you,” Tina continued, putting out a hand and cupping Tina's left tit, “You should be quite aware of what's going on. And this should feel quite good.”

As Goldi had watched Tina's hand approach she had initially screamed out for Tina to back off, but once flesh met metal those thoughts changed to, *Oh God, yes! Please God, let me touch myself!* Goldi was actually disappointed when Tina withdrew her hand. Goldi's mind was a mess as she realized how quickly her thoughts had switched.

“So, now to get you set up. I don't know how long I get to be outside the lamp before whatever all-mighty power that oversees me realizes you aren't making a third wish, so I better make this quick...”

With that, Tina floated around and behind Goldi, dragging her lamp across the floor behind her. Goldi was still mentally panting from the stimulation, unable to do anything but gather her senses and listen. It sounded like Tina was moving around some of the larger items behind the inert woman.

“There we go...” Tina's voice floated to Goldi's ears before the genie's arms did, wrapping around Goldi under the armpits, “This should be a good spot for you.”

Goldi could feel herself being tipped and dragged backwards, her feet scraping against the floor. Goldi sensed no actual damage was being done to her person, but the sensation was surreal. Goldi realized that Tina the Genie had improved strength over Tina the Loser; maybe not enough to lift Goldi completely, but Goldi doubted any single human could have tilted her back without being crushed.

Finding herself tilted upright and positioned into the corner of the room, Goldi watched with useless silent begging as Tina now dragged some of the urns and replica armor in front of Goldi, obscuring most of her body and leaving only her face to peak out through the unused displays.

There was a sensation of some sort of light fabric resting against the toes of Goldi's left foot, and she realized it was probably her clothing.

“There,” Tina smiled, crossing her arms. The genie was clearly happy with her handiwork, “Now you can watch all the exciting things that I'm sure go on in here...forever. Have a nice eternity, Goldi.”

*Get back here, you bitch!* Goldi cried out again as Tina scooped up her own lamp and floated out of the room, leaving the lights on. Goldi was left with her thoughts running at breakneck speed, until finally she mentally exhausted herself. It wasn't sleep, but Goldi finally just let her mind zone out as a small part of her continued to believe it was all a nightmare. She just had to wait for an alarm to go off.

Hours later, movement out of her peripheral vision caused Goldi's mind to stoke itself back up to full capabilities. But it was a waste; morning must have rolled around and Appleton was investigating the open and lit room. Goldi again tried to cry out for help as the pudgy man walked through the shelves, but it was no use. No amount of effort would get her body to budge one inch in order to alert him of her presence. Instead the man grumpily picked up the discarded checklist, turned off the lights, and left the room. In the complete darkness, once Goldi's mind finally wound down again, she actually had something close to mental sleep.

The darkness would be interrupted a few times, and Goldi could only assume that the course of a few days had passed. First was Appleton's return as he tried to complete the storage checklist on his own. Goldi watched the man's frustration grow as she attempted to cry out the occasional, *Help!* just to see if maybe *this* time things were different. Lacking success, Goldi watched as Appleton gave up and left in a huff.

Quite a lot of darkness passed, and the next time the lights turned on Appleton had with him another girl, one Goldi recognized from her class but did not recall her name. She was clearly the next



replacement hired for Goldi and Tina's oft-vacated position. At first Goldi was pissed, wondering if anyone was *actually* looking for her; her mother was dead, her father perpetually drunk. She had flirted her way into a scholarship. The idea that no one cared that she was missing sat heavy on her mind, distracting Goldi from realizing that Appleton had left the new girl to her task.

Suddenly a thought struck Goldi; *she* wasn't in the thick checklist this blonde replacement held in her hands. Hope sprang up again in Goldi, as she realized eventually she'd *have* to be noticed and maybe something would be done! She watched eagerly as the girl looked at the list, looked around the room...and then started checking off everything on the first page.

*No!* Goldi exclaimed, *No no no no no!* The sexy golden bauble realized this bitch had no intention of bothering to check for each item; an idea that now infuriated Goldi both for robbing her of the opportunity to be found, and also for not having been thought of herself. As the girl finished the list for this storage room, Goldi had no choice but to watch the replacement text and surf on her cell phone until it had seemed like enough time had passed for her to have actually done her job. She then left the room, leaving Goldi hopeless, alone, and in the dark once again.

The next time the lights went on Goldi barely bothered to get her attention started up again. Her mind had drifted off in so many directions...anger, denial, bargaining, and was now on the precipice of accepting her fate; confined to this corner, locked inside her body, forever.

Goldi was so wrapped up in this train of thought she initially didn't notice that the new visitor was a voluptuous woman who looked to be completely covered in latex, and nothing else. It was only when she walked through Goldi's fixed gaze a second time that the golden girl took notice.

As the visitor again left the visible area of the room, Goldi now heard the click of the six inch heels as the woman paced in and out of the shelving units. As she again moved into Goldi's view it was clear the mysterious latex woman was looking for something.

*Please look over here, whoever you are, please see that I'm not supposed to be like this!*

At one point she did turn, but for that moment Goldi forgot her desire to be found. As the visiting woman's gaze flitted past Goldi, the golden statue saw for the first time that this person seemed to be *made* of black glossy rubber. Her hair – at first looking brunette in the stark fluorescent light – was in fact a curly arrangement of artificial material. Even her eyes were nothing more than glistening black orbs. Goldi also noticed that the woman's movements, while not jerky or stiff, were all methodical and purposeful; as if any unnecessary movement was a waste of energy and effort. It was actually quite graceful.

“Any luck in there?” came a woman's voice from outside of the room. The rubber woman's head, now looking over the items along the wall to Goldi's left, did not turn to direct her response back.

“No,” the searcher responded, her heels clicking slowly as she started to walk away from the golden prisoner. Goldi now noticed that she could see not seem to find where the ridiculous boots ended and any other part of the woman began. “Are you certain that the tracker is working?”

Goldi noted that each word the woman spoke sounded as if carefully chosen. She spoke succinctly and with deliberate articulation, although the sentence was not devoid of audible frustration.

“Bimbo says it's been through a thorough check,” the companion replied, entering the room and approaching the first woman. This second woman had a lean build, and seemed to be wearing a black

bikini top and denim shorts. However, the longer the second woman remained within the Goldi's view the more Goldi believed that the clothes were *painted* onto her. In addition, deep lines seemed to cut across her shoulders, neck, midriff, and high on each thigh. She was also barefoot – but with red painted around her toes and heel. And although she wore no shoes she stood as if also wearing heels. Goldi could see the woman's nipples in relief through the black paint, but could see no clef in the blue pattern between her thighs. The painted woman held up a small device, which resembled a touch screen computer, but at least two inches thick and mounted to a handle.

“This thing should be accurate to within ten feet. Looks like the signal is strongest in here. Are you sure you've seen nothing?”

“My eyes work just fine...although we know who gave them the clean bill of health.”

“Yeah, well, this thing got the same clearance. Working or not, Bimbo says it's the fourth dimensional tracking that's been giving us the issue.”

“Hmf...I am very sure Bimbo's gizmo is quite infallible and it is simply science we have to blame,” the sarcasm dripped like molasses off the rubber woman's words, “Quin, have I ever mentioned how much I hate fourth dimensional tracking?”

“Only as much as you trash talk Dr. Bimbo, yeah,” the woman apparently named 'Quin' replied, shaking her head and walking off again with the device held up in the air.

*Wait, please, whoever you are – one of you please notice me!*

Again, Goldi's mental pleas were unheard. She could hear Quin pad around the room on her toes, moving some items around shelves and complaining of 'wild goose chases.' The first woman slowly click-clacked her way around the room, clearly more methodical in her search than the other.

“C'mon, let's go – this place gives me the willies,” Quin finally spoke up as the first visitor started to cross into Goldi's vision once more.

“Does a museum give you flashbacks?”

“Hmm...let me think...an entire building that is solely designed to put things on display behind glass? I wouldn't say it *doesn't* stoke up a recurring nightmare or two. And I would prefer to get back to base before global realignment.”

“Very well, I do not wish to carry you more than necessary, that is certain” the rubber woman sighed, turning and passing her gaze over Goldi's corner once more, “I am satisfied reporting that the book is no longer-”

Goldi had started to mentally cry once again as both women started to exit the room, but the first woman's sentence had been interrupted as she took a step back into Goldi's view.

“What is it, Latex?”

*Holy shit, does she see me?* Goldi exclaimed, as this woman – 'Latex' – slowly started to approach Goldi's corner, her set of dark orbs clearly fixated on Goldi's yellow spheres. Walking up to the golden statue, Latex cleared some of the antiquities that Tina had piled up.

“Quin, bring the tracker,” Latex shouted – Goldi noticed that even the woman's teeth and mouth were made of the rubber material, “I need it set to scan for cognitive function.”

*Holy shit holy shit holy shit*, ran through Goldi's head, interspersed with *Please don't be a trick, please don't be a trick!*

Quin quickly ran up behind Latex, the device she had been using earlier turned over. Two extendable metal rods, like the rabbit ear antennas of older televisions, now stretched out of the bottom. Latex took the device from Quin and let each end of each metal rod rest against Goldi's forehead. Both of the visitors stared at the screen while Latex pushed some buttons.

*Please detect me! Whatever that thing is – please detect me!* Goldi screamed inside.

After a moment both women seemed to recognize something on the screen.

“We have a ping,” Latex announced, pulling the device away and handing it to Quin.

“I'll call in to Bellows. We'll get a recovery team, STAT,” the painted woman replied as she turned and walked out of the room, seeming to tap yet another function into the device.

Latex looked up into Goldi's eyes; her monochrome face smiled.

“If you can hear me, do not worry, my friend,” Latex sad, patting Goldi on her cold metal shoulder, “We have you now. You will not be alone. But you will have to be patient – and I can't guarantee things will get better.”

Goldi didn't hear all of what Latex was saying. Her mind was too busy screaming; *You know I'm alive! You KNOW I'm ALIVE! Thank you, thank you, THANK YOU!*

This time Goldi would have cried tears of joy.

If she could have, that is.

The entire experience following being discovered had been insane. The rubber woman, Latex, had stayed by Goldi's side for a few moments, explaining that some people were going to come and pack her up for transport. Latex had said that she had to go deal with some legal issues, and that she was probably not going to be back real soon, but told Goldi to not panic.

Left alone again, Goldi *had* started to panic just as a team of people arrived. The group was mostly women, although a few men seemed to be in the mix. The tight gray jumpsuits worn did little to hide their gender. The space around Goldi was quickly cleared, a small pneumatic lift brought in, and Goldi was quickly transported outside of the storage room.

The din that surrounded Goldi was incredible; the noise of the machine, the constant chatter of the work crew, the voice of Appleton arguing with someone about what was happening before he was forcibly removed from the room, and the clatter of the construction that was happening around Goldi's solidified form.

She felt her feet lowered onto something, and wooden panels were quickly raised around her on three sides, leaving the front of her still exposed.

It was now Goldi suddenly remembered she was *completely naked* and instinctively tried to cover herself – which of course failed. Her golden hands remained outstretched as before.

One of the packing crew nailed on another panel across her front, covering her body up past her head. Some sort of large tube was thrown over the top of this fourth board, and the face of Quin popped up over it.

“Now, in the event you can hear us – or maybe read lips – I just want to assure you that you will be unpacked as soon as we get back to HQ,” the woman announced, as if she was reading off a

clipboard. She wasn't even looking at Goldi, “But for the safety of your body, to lower the possibility of theft, and to ease transport we are going to seal you up for the time being. Begin packing fill.”

Quin's head disappeared and the hose sprung to life, pumping a high volume flow of packing kernels into Goldi's box. She could feel them pouring down her legs, piling up around her feet. It was then Goldi remembered; her body was very sensitive.

The flow of the tiny foam fingers down her legs was intoxicating. Hidden in the storage room Goldi had felt a small air flow from one of the vents, as it billowed gently over her unprotected breasts and golden flesh. But she had been so forlorn and certain of her eternity as a lost bauble her despair had overpowered any pleasure her body could have taken from the caressing air.

Now, feeling more positive about her future, Goldi could not stave off the sensation of the tiny invaders – which were beginning to push up against her hardened and exposed sex. Although she no longer had a pulse to quicken or a breath to slow, Goldi's mind was still very susceptible to sexual stimulation. And as the kernels continued to swarm around her form the golden statue was learning how just how stimulated her body could be.

By the time the hose shut off and was pulled away, Goldi was essentially covered up to the neck by thousands of impudent little fingertips that had no sense of personal space. As the final boards were nailed into place overhead, blotting out almost all light, Goldi's mind was struggling to keep focused. She was on the edge of a mental orgasm, and wasn't sure what would happen if she let -

Suddenly her container was tipping back, and Goldi's heavy body followed. Now all the kernels behind her were cradling her back and ass. But Goldi had maintained control, and held on as she felt everything start to wheel forward.

Not for long, however.

The sound of angry voices snuck through through the cracks of her transport crate, and suddenly the forward momentum ceased. Goldi was thrown forward as her body reacted to the inertia, and the kernels previously resting loosely in front of Goldi were now pressed hard against her breasts, nipples, and womanhood.

The warmth and pleasure of the orgasm washed over Goldi's mind. It was both beautiful and frustrating. Goldi was thankful for the release, glad to experience some pleasure from this hardened form. But at the same time the feeling was incomplete; she was unable to scream, blush, stretch, or do any of the other physical reactions she had always associated with an orgasm. As her mind cleared Goldi realized it was unlikely she'd ever have sex again. The most sensitive parts of her feminine flower were available, but penetration was impossible. Not she had all that much sex anyway, so it was all a moot point she laughed to herself.

Her inner monologue was cut short by some of the wood in front of her being cut away. Latex's voice, directed at some of the workers, wafted through this new hole in front of Goldi's face that was approximately the size of a car's rear view mirror. Latex's dark eyes then appeared and locked with Goldi's.

“Now, if you can see, feel free to look out and know that you will not be trapped in complete darkness and mystery.”

Goldi would have thought, *Thank you*, but the motion of the crate tilting and moving again further stimulated her auric body. The metal woman quickly realized something else about a golden

statue orgasming; she couldn't get physically exhausted. There was nothing to stop the infernal packing material from getting her going all over again.

Goldi didn't even know she had been packed on a truck, or how long she had been on it. Starts and stops, bumps, vibrations, every movement contributed to her body being caressed from every corner by a thousand fingers. Anything going on outside the hole in her create had ceased mattering. Goldi had stopped counting how many times she had cum long ago; now she was simply constantly stimulated, rolling from one orgasm to another.

It wasn't a bad way to travel.

Outside, the nondescript flatbed zoomed down the highway. Behind it was a van, and at various distances around these two large vehicles were innocent looking consumer cars. These cars, however, held the completely human looking agents and were constantly watching for threats.

Eventually taking an exit off the highway that looked closed, the vehicles made their way to a large building that sat about five miles away from the main road. It looked like an industrial factory, something that would be expected to refine steel or iron. Some parts of it rose five stories, others only two, but the entire complex was joined together by hallways and platforms and seemed to be at least 75 years old. Corrugated metal siding covered the majority of the rusting complex.

At the top of the highest structure were four individually constructed and lit symbols:

## **M&GE**

Each portion of the abbreviation was at least 25 feet tall. Beneath it, in smaller lettering that was much more weathered and dilapidated, hung “Marketing & Global Economics – We See The World.”

A chain link fence ran around the complex, disappearing into a grove of maple trees. At the front was a small guardhouse, an older gentleman watching a series of angles from security cameras. As the vehicles approached the cross bar, hitting a few speed bumps and adding to Goldi's orgasm count, the old guard shambled out and approached the driver of the first vehicle. Once security forms were traded, Goldi's truck passed through the raised crossbar, as the guard restarted his security check on the van.

Once inside the fence, the truck drove around to one of the large garage doors that was slowly heaving itself open. Pulling into the darkened room, the truck finally came to stop.

If Goldi had the ability to catch any breath, it would have been now. But she would not have had long to do so. Everything from there forward was a blur of movement and orgasms. She didn't even remember what was said to her when the wood sides were taken down and all the damned packing peanuts finally flowed away from her body, like a thousand fleeing voyeurs who have been caught at the window.

So turned to well-pleasured mush was Goldi's brain that it only started focusing again when some woman in a lab coat started sticking things to Goldi's head. Finally bringing herself around, Goldi recognized herself as being in some sort of laboratory. The walls, once white, were stained by years of chemicals and reactions. The tables Goldi could see were filled with electronics of different sorts. Goldi only consciously caught a brief glimpse of the rapidly working woman who, Goldi now realized, had been talking to her for who knew how long.

And Goldi thought she saw, under the stereotypical white lab coat, a flash of black lingerie.

“...and so that's why you shouldn't panic when everything suddenly goes black and silent,” was all Goldi heard from the woman as suddenly everything went black and silent.

Once again trapped by both her body and darkness, Goldi eagerly waited. Then 'eagerly' turned into 'desperately.'

*Oh God, maybe I missed something important. Did they give up on me? What is on me? What's this pressure around my head? Oh shit, what if they melt me down? What happens to me then? What are they-*

Goldi's panicked ramblings were interrupted as light suddenly erupted into her eyes. What normally would have blinded her now barely had an effect, as Goldi realized she had no reason to feel pain any more – it was just a safety mechanism for a fleshy and vulnerable body, right? And light and dark normally would have been adjusted by tiny moving pieces in her eyes – how the hell did they work now? She realized her vision wasn't focusing – whatever it was in front of her was artificially adjusting its visual settings.

For a moment the brightness seemed to fade into video static, and suddenly an image cut in. It was of a woman, in a military uniform, seated at a table. Her hair was silver and tucked under a military cap. Her uniform, adorned with medals, didn't seem to be cut right. She was attractive, but what most struck Goldi's attention was the woman's eyes. They were a light blue – so light they almost seemed gray. And although this woman didn't seem to be any older than her early thirties at most, Goldi thought the woman's eyes betrayed a wisdom and gleam of exhaustion only received from the advanced age of a hard fought life.

There was little else that Goldi could see in the room; just the edge of a table, the seated woman, a microphone, and a stark wall in the back. There was also the silver head of a metal eagle partially poking up behind the edge of the table – the top of an ornamental cane handle. The woman leaned over and tapped gently on the microphone, and although initially there was no noise the third tap suddenly came through loud and clear.

In her former form Goldi would have jumped at the intensity and suddenness of the sound, but now she had no choice but to quietly accept the volume.

“General, I need you to speak into it, not molest it,” the voice of the woman in the lab coat came through quietly, and Goldi realized that the pressure against the sides of her metal skull was from headphones.

“Ah, yes, of course,” replied the uniformed woman, clearing her throat and adjusting her position in the chair, “Uh...testing, one two, testing...”

Goldi could tell that the volume against her ears was being adjusted, finally stopping at a level just a tad high of perfect, but better than it had been.

“Okay, proceed, General.”

“Good, thank you,” the uniformed woman replied, coughing into a closed fist before continuing, “Hello unidentified ping. My name is General Bellows. You are currently residing in a laboratory branch of MaGE RD&R. That stands for Magic and Genetic Engineering Research, Defense, and Recovery. We are a secret, privately funded organization that is aware of some of the unknown or unbelievably threats that currently face an innocent population. As you are already aware, you have been a victim of one of these unusual and unbelievable dangers.”

*You got that right*, Goldi thought. If she could have laughed at the obviousness of the statement, she would have.

“We have a number of people like you here, we call you Petrified Inanimate Nonresponsive Gynoids,” it was now Goldi realized the use of “ping” around her was not a word but an acronym, PING, “...and we hope that you will be able to help us, help you.”

Goldi cringed at the last turn of phrase in General Bellows' statement, uncertain what to make of it.

“What you may feel resting on your head right now is a special helmet developed by our top scientist, known as Doctor Bimbo. It is what is allowing you to see and hear me right now, although I am actually seated far across the building at our training room. But sight and sound are not its only capabilities,” General Bellows continued. She took a breath, as if not certain how to proceed.

“Doctor Bimbo has been studying PINGs like yourself and believes she has developed a way for you to communicate outside the prison that your body has become. In a moment we will test it, but I have to warn you...” General Bellows paused again, “...there have been no successes so far. However, based on the field data Latex and Quin gathered, it seems that there is something unusual regarding the process that transformed your body into gold. We are hoping it will make the difference. Now, I need you to simply think about saying something. Don't just *think* something, think about *saying* something.”

*What the hell does that mean?* ran through Goldi's head, *Think about saying something? How the hell do I...does she mean to think about talking? Like I would think about moving my arm? What does that feel like? I always just...talked...okay so let's try this...that's what it feels like to try and move my arms...and that – no, that's trying to move my jaw. Shit, what am I supposed to think about saying? How would I even know if it worked?*

As Goldi's thoughts ran like a freight train through her head, she could see Bellows start to sigh and sit back in her chair, as if she had already given up. She covered the microphone and started to say something off screen.

*No no no! Don't give up yet! I can do this, I can do this! I just have to...screw it, that's it, I'm stuck trapped in here forever. What good does it do me to have people know I'm in here if I still can't do anything? Face it Goldi, you're completely fucked.”*

It was only the fact that General Bellows jumped that made Goldi rethink what had just happened, and realized that she had also heard the word “fucked” echo through her own headphones. The voice sounded nothing like her own, but there had definitely been a loud swear that reverberated through the room. General Bellows turned to someone outside Goldi's viewpoint.

“Did you hear-”

“Yes, I heard it...we've never gotten a result so I don't know what to make of it, yet,” came the light sounding voice of the off-screen Dr. Bimbo.

*Holy shit, I did it!* Goldi cried out, but she realized that her joyous exclamation had not gone through the speakers, *Oh crap, but it doesn't do me any good if I can't ever do it again. Try, you immobile bitch, try and do it again before it's clearly been a fluke and you're trapped in here forever!”*

Again General Bellows reacted, and Goldi realized her repeat success. She was beginning to figure out what she had to do.

“How...long have you been a statue?” Bellows asked, leaning forward towards the camera broadcasting to Goldi.

*Don't...don't know,*” Goldi corrected herself, “What day is it?”

“The twenty third,” Bellows replied. There seemed to be tears welling up in the woman's eyes as she spoke with the camera.

*Of...of what month?*”

“April.” The building tears had disappeared after a few blinks, and stoic duty had replaced the slow burning grin that Bellows had sported shortly ago.

*Three weeks!* Goldi cried out in her head. She didn't know if that felt too long or too short. But she repeated the time over the headset and speakers for General Bellows.

“That lines up fairly close to when we detected the Directoria may have appeared there,” Dr. Bimbo's voice drifted through once again.

“What is your name?” General Bellows asked.

“Goldi Dawn,” Goldi said, and then added, “Don't laugh, I know the irony.”

Bellows did let out a few chuckles, but Goldi sensed it was more at her assertion of irony than at her situation.

“Pleased to meet you, Goldi. Can you tell me, was it a strange old book with a jewel on the cover that turned you into this statue?”

“No,” replied Goldi, still internally overjoyed at being able to communicate once more and eager to talk, “It was a genie in a classic Aladdin's lamp. But the genie had been a classmate of mine who said a strange book and something from it turned her into a genie.”

“Oh, great...thanks,” Bellows said into Goldi's camera before turning to shout off screen, “Get another recovery crew over to the Delta-12 detection point immediately. We get to thank the Directoria for leaving a rogue genie on the loose.”

*Too bad I couldn't talk when you found me, I'd like to give Tina a piece of my mind...* Goldi thought to herself, really just checking that she still had a choice between an internal monologue and a voice.

“So, can you turn me back?” Goldi asked, and General Bellows turned back to the camera, a very serious look on her face.

“Not at this time, I'm sorry,” Bellows answered directly, “We still lack the ability to undo this type of transformation...or any really. The cause of magic still escapes us. Currently we do our best to make afflicted individuals capable of reacquiring some sort of normalcy. And in that regard I have a proposition to make.”

Goldi watched as General Bellows fished under the table and pulled up a folder. Flipping it open, she pulled out a picture. It was hard for Goldi to make out, but it vaguely looked like a female shaped android.

“Just as you are able to talk by *intending* to talk despite the physical inability to do so, Dr. Bimbo believes that she can also capture the conscious intentions to walk, shake hands, punch, run, et cetera that can only be isolated within the mind of a PING. We have been working on an advanced



automaton called...I won't call it that.”

Goldi watched as the final part of Bellow's sentence drifted off screen as the woman turned. Again the voice of Dr. Bimbo came over the headphones.

“What's wrong with the name?”

“You made it a pun. I know what that periodic symbol means. How did you come up with that so quickly?”

“Because I'm incredibly brilliant. And what's wrong with puns? It keeps me...grounded.”

“Uh, fine...” Bellows sighed, shaking her head and returning her attention to Goldi, “We would like you to volunteer for a program to develop mechanized avatars for PINGs. Piloting the machine remotely with your mind, you'd have, second hand, all the mobility and freedom as before. It's called...Project: ROBAuT. With an Au instead of a second O...because Au is the periodic symbol for gold...and Dr. Bimbo thinks she's witty.”

“I am witty.”

If Goldi could have smiled she would have. She couldn't think about saying “Yes!” quick enough.

The next few days were not very exciting. A friend of Goldi's used to have a saying, “Enthusiasm only lasts for two days...or two hours in a car.” Goldi had now added, *...or two minutes if imprisoned in your own gold-transmuted body.*

The synapse detecting helmet had been removed by one of Dr. Bimbo's staff, once again leaving Goldi mute. Too heavy to move on a whim, a small TV had been wheeled into the room and raised up a bit on thick outdated chemistry books. Goldi had never enjoyed daytime soaps, and this certainly was not helping.

At one point Goldi had found her face covered in plaster for unknown reasons, and her time incapable of watching the over-dramatic operas was almost welcome. She was sad to see the channel had not changed by the time the plaster had been removed.

Just as she was starting to think death was a better alternative to daytime television, Goldi once again found herself wearing the helmet. This time when everything switched on Goldi suddenly found her vision coming in doubled and out of focus, as if she was drunk. Again Goldi saw the interrogation room, this time empty with but a few cups placed on the table.

“Now,” Dr. Bimbo's voice spoke up. She was not communicating through headphones; the head scientist was in the same room as Goldi. “How does that look?”

“Horrible...I'm seeing double and everything's fuzzy.”

“Okay, one moment, I'm going to adjust the focus.”

After a moment the image shifted into sharpness and Goldi announced that things were corrected. Then the images started to swing back and forth, and when Goldi shouted out that everything was aligned she realized that her “vision” had depth.

“It's a new stereoscopic display,” Bimbo said, as Goldi thrilled at the ability to tell which cup was truly closer to her. It was obviously a test – the cups were actually different sizes and only truly

three dimensional vision could show which was nearest or farthest. Bimbo asked Goldi a few questions regarding the cups and she passed.

“Okay now,” Dr. Bimbo continued as a lab assistant took the helmet off of Goldi, “For the next few tests we're going to be putting you in what is called the Sensory Hub. It's from there that you'll be piloting the Robaut. I still have some more tests to run before everything is entirely operational, so you'll have to be patient, okay?”

Without the helmet Goldi was unable to vocalize her affirmative response, but as she felt herself tilted back and placed on a pneumatic dolly she wondered if Bimbo cared about the answer anyway. Goldi was starting to get annoyed she had still not yet seen the master scientist.

Wheeled out of the lab and down the hallway, Goldi was mostly straight upright in the dolly and had her first good look at the inner workings of MaGE. The hallways were white and brightly lit, with security camera's peppered about. People briskly walked every which way, many checking lists on clipboards or talking on personal communicators to persons unknown to Goldi.

As she turned some corners and went deeper into the facility, Goldi noticed that the complex was populated by a very high ratio of women. For every ten women there was maybe one man. All dressed in tight jumpsuits which reminded Goldi of the henchmen working in the lair of an evil genius in some movie. Unable to ruminate on it long, Goldi soon found herself outside an odd looking sliding door with a tiny plexiglass window. One of the women who had been pushing her punched a code into a wall panel and the door slid open.

As the room revealed itself Goldi could see all sorts of mechanical pieces move and pull away from the center of the small space. Probably only twice the size of a port-a-potty, Goldi could see something rising up from the center of the interior space, as large rubber sheets and other mechanical arms pulled back along the sides. Another lab woman stepped forward, carrying Goldi's 3D enabled helmet. Moving inside, the woman attached the helmet to an extendable pole that had raised up from the center of the room. After confirming its fixture the woman stepped outside, and Goldi was wheeled in. Stopping at the center and being turned around to face the door, Goldi internally cooed and tried to control herself as eight hands grabbed her and shimmed the lift out from under her feet.

Goldi watched the lab women leave and she wondered what was next when the door slid shut. Suddenly all of the mechanical devices around Goldi started to wrap in round her, and the last thing Goldi saw before the inactive helmet lowered over her eyes was the face of a gorgeous bespectacled platinum blonde woman staring in through the window.

Then darkness.

Goldi could feel the rubber sheets enveloping her. Every inch of her body was having some sort of pressure applied to it; from Goldi's lips down every curve of her auric form to her toes. It was a light constant pressure, just enough pressure that Goldi was aware of its presence, but not enough to get her sensitive body back into the orgasmic loop the crate had put her in.

Inside the “Sensory Hub” Goldi wasn't certain how much time was passing. Every once and a while one of the items surrounding her body – and there were many of them – would twitch, causing Goldi's mind to jump a little. Some prodded, others brushed, others slid, and others clicked against her hardened form. As each one seemed to be tested with no seeming order or timing, Goldi began to feel like she was little more than a science experiment.

Then her vision switched on.

Once again static covered everything for a moment, then a clear and three dimensional image soon started feeding into the high definition screens pushed up very close to Goldi's eyes. So good was the picture that she did almost feel like she was in the other room.

Not that it looked like a very exciting room to be in. It, like the hallways, was stark white, except the walls looked like the padding of an insane asylum's cell. A woman in a lab coat was fussing with wires and other electronics all around Goldi's camera. Again, Goldi could not seem to get the woman's face into view, but it was obvious she had a very impressive bust.

*Pshhht*

“Hello, Goldi, can you hear me?” suddenly erupted over Goldi's headphones. The stereo was very much in effect, and Goldi could tell it was coming from the left of her view.

*Hello...Hello, yes, I can hear you,*” Goldi replied, almost forgetting how to talk.

“Excellent,” Dr. Bimbo's voice replied, a clear tone of pride and excitement coming through, “Goldi, do you need me to adjust your audio at all? And is your visual satisfactory?”

“I can see just fine, the volume could go down a notch.”

“How's this?”

“Perfect.”

“How does your voice sound?”

It was ten minutes before Goldi was happy with how her artificial voice sounded, and then another forty-five before anything else was said. Goldi simply watched her lovely view of nothing but an empty padded wall, which now and again held the shadow of Dr. Bimbo's lab coat encased figure. It was almost like watching a silent science fiction film, as the silhouette pulled at wires and fiddled with things Goldi could not even imagine.

“Alright now,” the light and airy voice of the mysterious doctor finally spoke up, “The first thing I want you to try doing is raising your arm.”

“Which one?”

“Either.”

Goldi decided to try her right arm, and thought about moving it. After a moment or two of trying different ways of thinking about it she could start to sense a slight pressure on her actual arm, as if air was moving past it, and slowly a mechanical arm and hand slid up into Goldi's view.

“I did it!” Goldi exclaimed, thinking about flexing her fingers – which followed through to the plastic digits in the corner of her vision. At first they flexed as a group, and then she individually moved them.

“How am I...it's like I can feel this!” Goldi exclaimed, touching each fingertip to her outstretched thumb.

“Yes,” Bimbo replied, still out of sight somewhere behind the Robaut, “The gynoid has millions of feedback sensors spread along its exterior. Anything that effects them – wind, inertia, contact – is transmitted back to the Sensory Hub. The Hub has various items surrounding you which will try – and I stress *try* – to recreate the sensation across your golden body. This is so that not only can you properly react to whatever is happening around your remote form, but additionally your mind won't be

constantly ripped out of the immersion effect of remote commanding the machine. Although the sensations are not one-to-one and there are some portions that lack any at all.”

Goldi had only listened to part of Dr. Bimbo's explanation. She had discovered that the left arm and hand were also active, and was now moving them in synchronization and making fake martial arts moves. Even her Robaut head was starting to move and bob in reaction to what she was trying to do, freeing Goldi of her locked view point. For a moment Goldi did feel like she was no longer trapped in her body, until she tried to kick.

Nothing.

“Why don't my legs work?” Goldi asked, feeling her perception slip back into her golden prison.

“You're driving a multi-million dollar machine,” Dr. Bimbo spoke up. Goldi tried to turn the cameras as far as she could, but it would only go as far as an average human could turn her neck and move her eyes. The mysterious scientist continued, “You'll have to excuse the fact that we have the training wheels on.”

After another hour of testing Goldi had perfected the use of her arms and Bimbo had activated control of her legs. Taking a few tentative steps Goldi could feel a tug on her back; clearly some sort of beam tethered her to the ceiling. It forced her to walk only a straight line. It also kept the gynoid from toppling over, as Dr. Bimbo had to make many adjustments to the servos and gyroscopes that acted as the machine's inner ear and kept it upright. The Robaut had stood on its own with no issue before, but it never had an imprecise human mind directly trying to walk with it.

Eventually, after many missteps and incidents that Goldi imagined were like watching any child learn to walk, she finally had the hang of it. More and more leeway was granted to the supporting arm and Goldi finally had free motion to walk in all directions around the room, but she was unable to turn 360 degrees. Finally Bimbo announced, “I'm going to disengage that support beam.”

Once she felt the tug on her back pull away Goldi finally had her full range of movement, and turned around. Ratcheting her head up towards the source of the voice Goldi almost audibly gasped.

*Holy shit, she's gorgeous!*

Standing near the back of the room, behind a table completely covered with monitors, wires, buttons, and anything else sciency that Goldi could have ever thought of, was a tall woman in a lab coat with long platinum blonde hair. Goldi's cameras focused on Dr. Bimbo's face first. Under the waves of glistening hair that flowed straight down her back, the woman's face was slightly ovular, with curved cheekbones and pouty lips, but with strong lines in just the places best suited for them. A pair of glasses sat on the ridge of a small nose, and a pair of perfect ears were jut visible under a curtain of hair. Brilliant eyes easily pierced right through the lenses that sat before them.

Normally such a woman's body would have been obscured by the long white lab coat that hung from the doctor's delicate shoulders, but not this woman. Her coat was completely unbuttoned, allowing Goldi to see within. A pair of enormous breasts, encased in a black lacy bra, hung from Bimbo's chest. Goldi guessed they were larger than the woman's head, and although held back by the flirty undergarment they appeared to be near perfect spheres. Nipples of proportionate magnitude pushed hard against the bra.

Beneath her chest Bimbo's stomach was flat and tight, but not muscular. It seemed soft despite

looking trim. Her waist tucked in and flared out to magnificent hips which completed the hourglass look. Tiny black panties snugged over her hips, and a pair of gorgeous thighs disappeared behind the table.

Goldi had never been attracted to women, but if she was going to start somewhere this woman would have been it. Although each piece of her body on its own seemed absurd, and a caricature of the female form, as an ensemble Dr. Bimbo was breathtaking.

“Are you done?” the scientist interrupted Goldi's gawking and her mechanical head shot up to meet Bimbo's bespectacled eyes.

“Oh, yes! I mean, no, I – sorry!” Goldi stumbled through, now looking away and walking across the room.

“Statistically that's the average reaction to my presence – whether it's the subject's first time getting a look or not. Don't worry about it,” Bimbo replied, returning her attention to the machines in front of her.

“How did you...why are you...” Goldi stammered. Not knowing what else to do she fiddled with the bar that had been previously attached to her back.

“We can discuss my origin later...” Bimbo replied, shutting down a few things and grabbing a clipboard that held a large stack of papers. She walked around the table towards her test subject. Goldi could hear the clack of high heels, and saw out of the corner of her eye the absurd shoes Bimbo was wearing. “Right now we need to get *your* origin taken care of.”

“My...” Goldi turned and looked Bimbo in the eyes as the scientist handed Goldi the clipboard. She had not followed the scientist's train of thought.

“I need to see to other projects, eat, and get in some rest this evening,” Bimbo explained, leaving Goldi with the clipboard and walking away towards a door, “On that sheet are all the physical tests you should try performing on your own before we run some of the official data recordings tomorrow.”

“When I'm done, can I go out and...walk around?” Goldi asked, looking up from the ream of paper.

“No,” Bimbo said, opening the door and making a point to visibly set the lock of the exterior latch, “Until we're certain of the reliability of the satellite feed we're...partnered with I can't risk a signal loss and have you tumbling down steps or causing some other damage. Stay in here tonight. Once we're sure everything is reliable you'll be able to run around as much as you like.”

Before Goldi could reply Bimbo had disappeared out the door and shut it behind her.

Goldi sighed, and looked down at the new stack of papers she now had to go through and check off. Some things never change.

But this time she wasn't going to pick up any oil lamps.

A quarter of the way through the checklist and Goldi was bored. So far everything had worked fine. The room – clearly a testing facility – had a closet full of ramps, wedges, rockers, and other items which the checklist instructed Goldi to use. Although activities like jumping were at first difficult – thanks to the unusual way the Sensory Hub had to indicate rising, falling, and especially landing –

Goldi quickly adjusted.

Not certain of how much weight the mechanical form was designed to carry Goldi hadn't tried any acrobatic moves, but she felt she could probably do them if she wanted.

Dropping the clipboard to the floor, Goldi wandered around the room, making her way back to Bimbo's control area. Careful not to touch anything, Goldi flitted her attention over keyboards, monitors, and other items she had no idea what were. Her curiosity satisfied, she turned to go back to the main floor when suddenly she noticed something.

A mirror.

Without even realizing what she was doing, Goldi stood up and looked at herself.

An strangely familiar automaton stared back.

Definitely female in shape, and very human looking, Goldi was amazed by it. Mostly gray, white, and clear plastic, the mechanical form gracefully stepped closer to the mirror for further examination.

Investigating the face, Goldi was amazed that...it was her. She now understood what the plaster face mask had been for; making a rubber mold of her visage. Beneath the clear rubber that recreated her face Goldi could see the faint shadows of pneumatics and small levers that adjusted her features to account for her facial expressions. A plastic recreation of her hair even ran back across her head and stiffly ended past her neck. Sitting below the start of her stiff hairdo she saw that the eyes had fake yellow irises placed over the twin camera lenses to make them look less robotic.

“Hello,” Goldi said, and watched her plastic lips move. A speaker lay behind them, giving the perception of an interior to her orifice. Her mouth mostly matched the shape of the spoken word. It wasn't perfectly synched, but better than the dubbed films she'd watched late at night while her father was passed out. Memories of those laughable movies made Goldi giggle internally, and she was delighted when her artificial lips briefly formed a smirk.

Following the lines of her construction down her neck to her chest, Goldi found two large spheres that formed artificial breasts. Goldi could see that their large size was mainly to house her internal computers and drivers. From there her body pinched down to a wasp-like waist, which connected to two flaring ball joint hips. The internal workings of her legs were obscured by smooth sheets of gray plastic, and her feet were actually raised up like high heels. While it did not look like she had toes she could indeed wiggle individual extensions of her feet which were covered over with a single sheet of flexible rubber to keep anything from becoming jammed in them.

Bringing her eyes back up and giving her whole body another look, Goldi was actually quite satisfied with her avatar. Although she was quite aware that this *wasn't* her body; her body was trapped motionless in a small room somewhere far away. But that little room was recreating almost every sensation this robotic form was experiencing, giving the impression that Goldi was indeed inside this training room. It was an odd feeling, and she realized she was going to have to find a way to rationalize it in her mind.

Suddenly Goldi noticed something. The surface of her breasts was not a completely smooth sphere. At the front of each sphere, just an inch above the center, there was another small dome that had a seam running across the equator of it. Each was maybe three inches across, and seemed to be hinged where the seam met Goldi's hollow breasts. Out of curiosity Goldi brought up a hand to the

right cap and touched the corners where the dome met the rest of her breast.

As she put pressure on the corners there was soft *click* and suddenly the halves of the cap slid inside Goldi's breast, revealing an artificial nipple.

Startled and surprised, Goldi didn't do anything for a moment, she just stared at the beckoning plastic nub. Like most of Goldi's gynoid body it was silvery rubber, but this silver was far darker than the rest.

Out of curiosity Goldi brought up a finger and gave it a poke – and a jolt of erotic pleasure shot to Goldi's mind...and somewhere else, which made her wonder...

Taking her other hand and popping open the cover to her second nipple, Goldi then put her hands to her hips and admired herself. But she soon directed her eyes *between* her hips.

Nestled between the pneumatic ball joints of her powerful legs, Goldi noticed a suspicious looking triangle of plastic. It seemed to emerge from the top of her artificial pelvis, and then curve down and get smaller as it disappeared under her body. With some anticipation Goldi pressed a finger to it, and with a small *click* the cover snapped back inside her.

Goldi could not believe that she was staring at her own plastic pussy. An apprehensive finger stretched out and poked it, and her remote controlled form jumped as her mind reacted to an even more pleasurable sensation. Goldi wasn't even thinking about the fact that it was all really just the Sensory Hub prodding her with some emotionless shaft. Goldi could finally run her hands over her body and attend to the satisfaction she had been robbed of in the crate.

As one hand pinched and rubbed a nipple, the other caressing the folds of her cyber sexuality, Goldi slowly lowered herself to the floor and squirmed in pleasure. She was of no mind to spot the small security camera zooming in on her.

“I thought you called me in here to show me progress, not porn,” General Bellows muttered as she watched Goldi's ministrations on a large screen inside Dr. Bimbo's private lab. The General's hands absently clutched the head of her cane, one finger tip tapping on the beak of the decorative handle. Her weight shifted uncomfortable from one leg to the other.

“This *is* progress,” Bimbo replied, rapidly taking notes on a clipboard as she watched the screen, “She's beginning to mentally accept her remote form not as an artificial vehicle but as her actual body.”

“Did you gain a Ph. D in psychology while I wasn't paying attention?” Bellows muttered, turning away from the screen as Goldi let out a cry of passion. Her first long due self-initiated orgasm was washing over her metal form and her artificial face clearly displayed how she felt about that.

“A lack of Ph. D does not mean a lack of working knowledge,” Dr. Bimbo replied, putting down the clipboard and reaching inside her lab coat. The busty scientist fondled herself, massaging her breasts and tweaking her nipples. Bellows again adjusted her view and faced away from this display. Dr. Bimbo's expression made it clear that her self-directed ministrations were simply to help her think, not for carnal delight. Her brow furrowed as she tried to recall something.

“I hate it when you do that,” Bellows muttered, awkwardly picking up a random piece of equipment and looking it over, “This is not what I expected my retirement to be like.”

“Yes, I remember now,” Dr. Bimbo's words picked up from her last sentence and were not in response to Bellow's comments, “This is a large step for her to accept reality...strangely enough by accepting something artificial.” The scantily clad woman pulled her hands away from her skin and placed them outside the lab coat on her hips.

“Ironic,” Bellows mused.

“No, it's not.”

Another orgasmic cry brought both women's attention back to the screen. Although the manufactured face was not capable of every emotional nuance, it was clear that Goldi was still reveling in her freedom.

“So this is normal?” Bellows asked, turning to Bimbo and pointing the end of her cane at Goldi. Dr. Bimbo removed her hands from her sides and picked up her clipboard again.

“If you're asking me if this is the average response based on my data, technically the answer is yes,” the platinum haired scientist replied with frustration in her voice, marking something on her clipboard and then lowering it as Bimbo locked eyes with Bellows, “But since my only source of data is her, technically everything she does is-”

“I know how averages work,” Bellows barked, adjusting her uniform's jacket and angrily limping over to the lab's door, cane clunking with each step of her shoes, “Look, Doctor, we both know I want this project to work. It could help a lot of people. But it's been expensive, and so far she has been our only success. You know if I don't have something to take back to the Two At The Top which justifies the costs, and the risk of being discovered because of the satellite, this will be canceled and my tenure may end up being even shorter than my predecessor's. And neither one of us wants that.”

“I will say that any personal animosity I have for you is overshadowed by your proven faith in my capabilities,” Dr. Bimbo replied.

“Yeah, well, just get me what I need to keep the extra *funding* going. If any other departments get tapped for this we may have a mutiny on our hands,” Bellows sighed, and she exited the room. Bimbo also let out a sigh herself, turned back to the screen, watched Goldi for another moment, then turned it off to leave the test subject to some privacy.

Completely unaware of her observation, Goldi was leaning against one of the walls, legs spread open and both hands poking at her groin. The whole experience was certainly unlike any masturbation she had done before, but four orgasms spoke for themselves. As the fifth one washed over Goldi, she felt her joints shake as the body reacted to the rocking her mind was doing. Finally mentally exhausted, Goldi let herself sink back further against the wall.

It took a moment for her to figure out how to close the nipple and vagina hatches, but eventually she slid them all shut once more. Feeling her mind becoming tired, Goldi decided she'd turn off the lights and get some form of sleep...or unconsciousness, whatever it was she did now.

Standing to find the light switch, Goldi stopped and looked at herself in the mirror again. The entire time she had been feeling her body, the thought that she was actually a solid gold statue somewhere else had only passed through her mind a few times, and even then not enough to knock her out of her robotic form and back inside her auric prison. Goldi realized she had really embraced this body.



*This is the new me...at least for the foreseeable future...Goldi thought, turning side to side like she was putting on a fashion show, But I'm not really Goldi Dawn anymore...I'm not using that body right now...*

Walking over and turning off the lights, she made a decision as she curled up on one of the large training wedges. As unconsciousness clouded her mind, her last thought was;

*I am Robaut.*

“...and, not that I mind or anything, but why am I anatomically correct?”

Dr. Bimbo hadn't seem surprised when Robaut asserted her new name the next morning, so the mechanoid woman had decided to be a bit more forward.

“It's to make sure you're able to accept this form as your body,” Bimbo replied, placing down a stack of papers, “As I mentioned, the Sensory Hub isn't quite a one-to-one ratio on feedback, simply because of technical limitations. But to purposefully deny you physical input of any sort would simply further draw you out of the perception of inhabiting this form.”

If Robaut could have blinked at this she would have, but after a moment she had managed to process the entire rapid-fire statement.

“Now, if Show And Tell is over, we have a few more tests to run,” Dr. Bimbo announced, shifting some things around on her desk and picking up a new clipboard.

“Okay...” Robaut muttered, trudging over to the testing area. Her frustration with having been trapped in the room all day was visible in the posture of the gynoid.

“Now, now, let's be a little more positive,” Dr. Bimbo spoke up, walking around the desk and casually pointing her pen at Robaut, “If it wasn't for this experimental form you'd be nothing more than a coat rack. Besides...just a few more tests today and I will find you a tour guide for the facility.”

Robot smiled, the gears along her back audibly whirring as her poise improved with her attitude. The testing session went quickly after that.

“Hi, I'm Christine Fiere! But you can just call me Fyre, everyone does,” the bouncing and enthusiastic blonde announced, holding out her hand. Robaut returned the handshake and gave back only half the smile Fyre had on her face.

“I've asked Fyre to give you a tour of the MaGE facilities,” Dr. Bimbo said as she checked the files in her hands and started to walk down the hallway outside of the testing room, “She's a member of the team that located you. I'm sure she'll be able to get you orientated with the facility.”

Without saying anything else Bimbo turned and strutted down the hallway, the click clack of her heels echoing throughout.

“She's...something else,” Robaut said, turning to gauge Fyre's reaction to the statement.

“Most everyone finds her annoying as hell, but she's brilliant and saved most of our lives or sanity at one point, so she has her good points,” Fyre replied, turning back to Robaut. Fyre was dressed in nothing more than a blue tube top and a pleated red and blue skirt. The tube top fought valiantly to

hold in the girl's grapefruit-sized breasts. The rest of her body was nicely athletic and a bit hippy. Her long blonde hair was split into two pigtails that ran down her back past her shoulder blades. Robaut noticed she was also barefoot.

“What's with her name?”

“Doctor Bimbo? I'm not sure,” Fyre replied, crooking a curious look and placing her hands on her hips, “I've heard a few rumors, like it's some sort of reminder or penance or something. I think General Bellows knows, but she'd never tell.”

“I see. So, uh, I'm...supposed to get a tour?” Robaut asked, realizing she was comparing the size of her artificial orbs against the bubbly blonde's biological ones.

For a moment there was no reply from Fyre. Robaut could see her eyes had suddenly angled to the side, her lips moving as if she was softly talking to someone. Then, just as quickly, the strange woman shook her head, wiped the mysterious expression away, and smiled up at Robaut.

“Yes! The tour!” Fyre exclaimed, as if nothing had happened, “There's so much I want to ask you about what's been going on in the outside world, but first things first...we'll start with the public portions.”

The tour was fairly straightforward, although lean on actual information. The sexy tour guide was quick to admit that she was one of the newest members of MaGE, having been brought in by a recovery team only eight months ago. But she already seemed to know her way around.

“This is where the Pubs...what we call the public facing employees...are stationed,” Fire grinned as the two women stood on a second story balcony that overlooked a depressing lobby. Clearly designed to seem bureaucratic and somewhat sterile, Robaut looked across the room and wanted to groan just from seeing at it. A circular office manager's desk sat in the center of the room, with worn office couches and tables strewn about. A woman sat behind the desk, and a troupe of depressing looking individuals were strewn across the room, reading magazines and using laptops or other personal devices.

“Should they be able to see us up here?” Robaut asked, motioning to the people on the chairs. Fyre laughed in response.

“Oh, no, silly!” the blonde giggled, pointing at a light on the wall. Of the two options – red and green – the red LED in the light was lit. “The woman at the desk controls that light, so we're okay. It means everyone down there is an employee of MaGE.”

“Then why are they...”

“It's a privilege some of the workers have – they can change into civilian wear and take their breaks in here to relax away from the floor. Sometimes we'll get some solicitor, or lost civilian, or even a snoopy cop. The desk person usually tries to deter them from coming in, but if it looks like they'll have to wait behind everyone else here to get whatever they want it gets rid of them faster.”

“Genius,” Robaut chuckled as they walked away from the railing, “...and just what is it people think this place does?” But Fyre's eyes were again off at some remote location, with quiet mumbling under her breath.

“No idea,” Fyre smiled, suddenly back with Robaut, “I think they picked 'Marketing & Global Economics' for the sign because it doesn't really mean anything.”

“So...what exactly *does* MaGE do?” Robaut asked, following Fyre down a stairwell, “I mean...I know it helps people like me...us?” The mechanical companion had added the 'us' to see what kind of reaction she could get, and Fyre just lowered her head, “...but all I know is that apparently they make robot bodies for PINGs.”

“Well, that's not all,” Fyre smiled. The two were now in a larger hallway that lead deeper into the facility, “There's physical therapy and...psychological assistance, and – well, let me just show you!”

The blonde took Robaut through the building, down some hallways and back towards the testing area. Entering another observation deck Fyre and Robot looked down on a room full of workers busy building various machines. Some had treads, others were like large keyboards, and Robaut could not figure out what some others were.

“What is all this?” Robaut muttered.

“It's how Bimbo temporarily solves people's problems,” Fyre explained, “Neither she nor any of the scientists have been able to crack the secret to magic...so no one yet knows how to permanently undo what's been done to...us. So Dr. Bimbo and her team have a three-fold job; figure out how to detect those afflicted with magic...figure out how to help those afflicted to return to the outside world safely...and figure out how to defend against it.”

“I see...” Robaut replied, familiar with the success of the first two items, “How do they defend against it?”

“Well, that one is tricky. It's hard to battle magic with science. They seem to play by different rules,” Fyre replied, looking a little bashful now, “What I understand is that the Defense portion was going pretty badly until Bellows was put in charge. Her answer to it was to create the team I'm on.”

“And how do you do you defend against it?”

“Well, it's a pretty broad interpretation of 'defend,’” looking a little bashful, “We have a variety of ways of collecting data regarding possible magic attacks. Once we know something is going down I and the team get there as fast as possible. Most of the time we're too late to *stop* anything but we're very capable of keeping things from getting worse and finding those who have been changed.”

“Ah...” Robaut replied, “And, do you mind if I ask...you look completely normal, why are you here?”

This time Fyre went completely red in the face, and she looked away from Robaut.

“I, well, you see, I'm-”

“FYRE!”

Robaut and the blonde both jumped at the sound of someone shouting behind them. They turned and found a woman of Asian decent standing in the doorway of the balcony. Robaut took note of the woman's short cut brunette hair and her very athletic build. Standing just over five feet tall, Robaut thought this woman could have been an Olympic competitor. A black sports bra and tight spandex shorts were all that she wore, which covered little of her lithe and slim body. Robaut once again wondered what someone seemingly so normal looking was doing at MaGE, when she noticed the woman's feet – or lack there of.

Instead of a foot at the end of each leg this woman had a fully functional and otherwise normal looking hand extending from each ankle.

“Grip! Hello, you startled us!” Fyre exclaimed, catching her breath.

“What are you doing up here?” Grip asked, her angry eyes never leaving the blonde.

“Dr. Bimbo asked that I give the woman a tour and I-”

“I don't care what Bimbo asked you to do, there's no excuse for not being in your session.”

“My session, but that's not for...” Not carrying any sort of time piece Fyre turned and looked down off the balcony and spotted a wall clock, which indicated it was six minutes past the hour. “Oh crap!”

Fyre turned and gave Robaut an apologetic look.

“I'm sorry, but I didn't realize we had gone for so long, please excuse me,” Fyre exclaimed to the gynoid, and she quickly left the balcony. After a moment of both Robaut and Grip watching Fyre bound off the women turned to each other. Robaut gave a smile.

“Hi, I'm-”

“I know who you are, *robot*,” Grip replied curtly, accentuating the pronunciation of the final word to indicate it was not Robaut's name.

“Oh, well,” Robaut replied, not sure what to do at this point, “I'm pleased to meet you...Grip, was it?”

“Enough pleasantries,” the athletic woman muttered, taking steps towards the metal woman. Robaut could see that Grips lower hands grabbed at the floor with tension during each step, mirroring the tight fists her normal hands formed, “I want you to know that not everyone finds your presence welcome?”

“I'm...what...sorry?” Robaut nervously replied. She had backed up when Grip approached her and felt the plastic that made up her shapely rump hit the railing of the balcony.

“You know this multimillion dollar project you're jaunting about in?” Grip sneered, jabbing Robaut between her plastic breasts, “Do you know how close it came to being canceled?”

“Uh...no?”

“One or two more failures and-”

“Stand down, Grip!”

Again the eyes of two women were drawn to the doorway as they followed the sound of the angry female voice. Standing, hands gripping her cane as she remained centered in the light, was General Bellows.

“Popular balcony...” Robaut muttered.

“Good evening, General Bellows,” Grip responded through gritted teeth, straightening up her posture and saluting her superior. Bellows lifted one of her hands from the silver head of the cane and returned the gesture. “I was just briefing our new friend here on the local-”

“I think I heard plenty of your 'briefing,’” Bellows interrupted, cracking a tired grin and almost letting a low chuckle roll out of her, “I believe In TripliKate reported having some new intelligence. I think it would be best for you to go get her most recent update on the Directoria's location.”

“Yes, ma'am,” Grip replied, starting to step away. The athletic woman paused, however, and

turned to Robaut. The avatar's microphone could hear Grip's fingers tapping on the floor just before she spoke; “Nice meeting you, *robot*...try not to trip or anything. It'd be a shame if you needed a new arm and we had to ration again.”

“That will be *all*, Field Commander.”

“Yes, General Bellows.”

Both Bellows and Robaut watched Grip storm away before Bellows turned to her companion on the balcony.

“Sorry about that, Gol – I mean, Robaut is it? I believe that's what Doctor Bimbo reported.”

“Yes...seemed to make the most sense to just use that now,” Robaut replied, not moving from her spot at the railing. General Bellows took a few steps forward, visibly limping. Although her face hid it well, her right leg gave her an intense amount of pain.

“Are you okay?” Robaut asked, her attention clearly fixed on Bellows' limp.

“What, this old thing?” the General replied, giving a laugh and slapping her right hip, “I got this back in...well, let's say I've had it long enough I don't know how I'd walk without it...or with it, I guess, depending on how you look at it. And my apologies about Grip. She's an excellent Field Commander when it comes to MaGE Force. She had one of the meanest gymnastic trainers to ever come out of Georgia.”

“The...state of Georgia?”

“Pfft, no...the country. Really gave her good experience on how to reign in and focus a team like what I've put together. But I can't say it left her with the greatest social skills.”

By now Bellows had reached the balcony railing and was peering down at the action below. She leaned her cane up against the bar and rested both hands on the rail. Robaut took the opportunity to examine Bellow's uniform; she didn't recognize many of the medals, and it just didn't seem to fit right on her frame.

“What she said...about rations...”

“Oh, complete exaggeration,” Bellows replied, not looking up, “MaGE does not have a bottomless source of funding, but we have plenty to properly upkeep the three key parts of our operations. Research, as you see here...” Bellows waived her hand down off the balcony, then turned and motioned back towards the door, “...Response, which just left...” and finally Bellows motioned in a vague flutter in no direction in particular, “...and Residency...which is off...somewhere.”

“Residency?” Robaut repeated.

“Yes...Bimbo mentioned arranging a tour, had that portion not been shown yet?”

“No, ma'am,” Robaut replied as the two women made eye contact again, “Grip interrupted Fyre's tour before we were done.”

“Ah yes, Fyre and Brimstone, my newest recruit,” Bellows smiled, going on before Robaut could sneak in a question about the names, “We passed each other in the hallway. Off to her weekly session I suppose. I highly recommend you go take a look around Residency. I'd accompany you but I need to complete my rounds before calling into a meeting. But ask for Connie when you get there...and don't worry, her bark is worse than her bite.”

On her own now, Robaut cautiously made her way along the hallway Bellows had ushered her to. After making some turns and walking down a great number of stairs Robaut found herself on the ground level of the building. Her stroll had taken her to the very rear of the facility, where a three story tall atrium stood.