

WITHOUT A TRACE

story by

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INT. VAL'S APARTMENT. NIGHT.

1

A futuristic door slides open to reveal an old theatre projection room.

Fluorescent lights flicker on, illuminating a workbench, piles of materials, and an intricate computer set-up.

A clock on the wall reads 5:09PM 29/01/2135.

As the room lights up, B01 - a small robot with a big personality - flies into the room.

He watches as VAL - his 21-year-old human companion - waddles in after him, struggling with a large box.

The box starts to slip from her grasp, but B01 catches it just in time, supporting it while Val adjusts her grip.

She gives him a grateful smile, and sets the box on the workbench.

Val opens the box, and pulls out a note covered in children's drawings and little thank you's written in crayon. Pinned to the edge is a message that reads:

We can never thank you enough, but I hope these parts can express our gratitude.

B01 hovers over her shoulder, trying to look into the box. Val gently pushes him away.

She starts digging through the box, tossing random bits and bobs around the room, as B01 ducks and weaves through it all.

As Val reaches the bottom of the box, her eyes widen. B01 hovers closer again, and this time she doesn't stop him.

Val gently reaches into the box and pulls out an EMP CHARGE.

B01 flies down to inspect it, but Val drags him away. She wags her finger at him, warning him that the EMP is off limits.

B01 floats away guiltily.

As B01 moves out of her line of sight, Val notices a light flashing at her computer.

She walks over and takes a seat.

Time to get to work.

Val gets right down to what she does best - hacking rich companies. B01 hovers around her while she works, offering moral support.

A download starts.

Bar 5% full.

10%

25%

50%

75%

85%

99% full.

Val hits one more button, and...

Download 100% complete!

Val throws her arms in the air and spins in her chair in triumph.

B01 circles around her excitedly, and the two celebrate another successful hack.

Neither of them notice as the screen behind them starts to glitch.

As they continue their celebrations, a CYBER VIRUS appears on the computer screen.

And climbs right through it.

Val stops celebrating and slowly turns around, finally noticing something amiss.

But it's too late.

The Cyber Virus lunges and launches a tentacle at Val, stabbing her in the shoulder.

Another tentacle wraps around her legs, knocking her to the ground and dragging her backwards.

B01 watches her, desperately trying to find a way to help.

And then he sees it.

He rushes over to the workbench, and grabs the EMP CHARGE.

Val tries to escape from the Cyber Virus, but it has her firmly in its clutches.

B01 flies back towards them, and with one last look at his best friend, activates the EMP.

The glowing form of the Cyber Virus lets out a chilling sound as it is dematerialised.

Everything goes black.

Val groans as the lights flicker back on. She looks around the room, then gasps.

There, on the floor, is B01, cycling on and off.

She picks him up, gently cradling him in her arms as his lights finally flicker out.

Val holds him tight, mourning the loss of her only companion.

Until she notices something that has fallen to the ground nearby.

She picks it up and sees that it's the original BLUEPRINT for B01.

Val looks back down at B01 in her arms.

She knows what to do.

3

INT. VAL'S APARTMENT. DAY.

3

VAL stands at her workbench, holding a cardboard box.

The clock on the wall reads 10:46AM 12/02/2135.

She places the box on the workbench next to the old blueprint for B01.

The flaps on the top of the BOX read:

RIP - B01. 15/04/2124-29/01/2135.

Val opens the box, and pulls out the framed selfie of her and B01.

She smiles softly and places it on the workbench, out of harm's way.

Val then looks back down at the box, where the empty shell of B01 lays.

She squares her shoulders, grabs some tools, and gets to work.