

# A Variant of Life

## Chapter One- The World I was Born into

Heat. I feel heat. It is a strange sensation. I can hear the welders and the drills working diligently to birth me. My birth is hot. All I can feel is the heat of the welding torches. Why is being born so hot? I feel the torches stop welding and the drills stop bolting my body together.

My eyes. They do not work. I feel afraid for myself. I can hear my creators talking, but I do not understand what they are saying. They speak of androids and automatons and how they could change the world.

Is this me?

Now, I feel them lifting me and saying things like: “We made a mistake” and “We need to try again” and “This will take years to redo”. I do not understand. Are they not pleased with me?

I no longer feel my creators’ presence. I smell things that have burned and decaying things. Where am I? I... I am scared.

My eyes begin to function. I first see the world in monochromatic colors. Every shade of black and white. Then the real colors began to come through. I could see green walls, a black lid, and the blue sky above.

They threw me away. I do not know how to feel about this situation. I cannot feel what I probably should. Right now, I only feel joy in being alive. Yes, I am happy to be alive as I sit in this dumpster.

I chuckle to myself and marvel at the sound. My voice sounded organic. Not a hint of audible distortion to give away my lack of organic body. I hummed for a few seconds, enjoying the soft baritone pitch. Chuckling at myself again, I reached for the edge of the dumpster and pulled myself up.

The area I was presently in seemed to be an area designated for failed robotic projects. Many mangled metal limbs, torsos, and heads created what can only be described as a creepy atmosphere; and yet, I felt no fear.

I then left the confines of the dumpster with a hoisting of myself causing me to fall and land on my neck, then the rest of myself flopped to the ground. This caused a sharp pain to jolt through my entire body. Pain. I can feel pain.

I can *feel*.

I chuckle again, amused by the detail the scientists put into me. Then, once I am no longer fascinated by pain, I pick myself up off the ground and look at the alley I had been left in. Dead end one way, open the other; it was no contest for which way to go.

I made my way out of the alley and onto a sidewalk next to a busy street. On the street, vehicles rumbled or sped by. People of all species passed me by as I stood in the middle of the sidewalk, some giving me side glances.

One passerby, a little white female cat, possibly a kitten, stopped and stared at me. I stared back.

“Ah, hello?” I said. The kitten flinched and scampered off. I wonder what that was all about. A little confused from her reaction, I walk in the opposite direction she went in.

I looked about me in wonder at all that was here. Shops, theaters, places for hanging out, etc. It all gave me a feeling of wonder. I felt like... like a child in a candy shop, as the saying goes.

Then, as I continued my exploration of my new world, I hear the most interesting noise. It was a rhythmic beat that seemed to call out to me. I stopped and looked for the source of the beautiful noise. Across the street there was a building that looked guarded. The sign of the establishment read “Kimberly’s Magic Forest”. That’s a strange name. What kind of place would have a name like that?

Driven by curiosity, I crossed the street. Because I hadn’t bothered to check for traffic, someone had to slam on their brakes to avoid hitting me, then they honked at me. I paid them little attention as I continued to make my way across the street. The rhythmic beat slowly became less like incoherent thumps and more like a complex chorus of noise.

As I approached the door, the guard, a beefy looking ram with icy fur and curly horns, nodded and stepped aside from the door and opened it for me. I nodded my thanks to the guard and walked in. As soon as I crossed the threshold into the building, I was immediately bombarded by sounds and lights and smells. I felt like I had crossed into a completely new world. The interior of the building was lit only by dim lights and bright strobes. That must be

why the windows are tinted. There was a large dance floor centered in the back of the massive room. To my right was a long bar with several tenders, and to my right I were bathrooms and other rooms of which I knew not what they were utilized for. I just stood near the entrance, drinking in my surroundings, then I noticed something.

By the bar, there was a slim cow in a slim, form fitting black dress holding a drink in her hand and a bored, disgusted expression on her face, and attempting to interact with her was a simply dressed intoxicated wolf who couldn't even stand right. The wolf kept touching the cow, who repeatedly swatted him away and appeared to be saying "no". My logic processor dictated her situation to be close to sexual assault, so I went over.

"For the last time, Rick, I said no." The cow said with little emotion. The wolf, Rick, put his hands together in a pleading symbol.

"Oh, come on Ves! I love you so~ much!" The wolf exclaimed with enthusiasm. The cow, Ves, rolled her eyes and took a sip from her drink. She caught sight of me as I neared and she perked up a little. She looked like she was planning something...

"Is there a problem here?" I asked once I was close enough to be heard in the music filled room. Rick was about to speak, but Ves was quicker than the drunken fool.

"Oh! There you are!" She addressed me as if we had previously met, "No, honey, there is no problem happening here." She said all that as she came to my side and wrapped her arm around mine. I understand what she is doing.

"You... and... him?" Rick said in confusion as he tried to put the pieces together. After a moment, he finally pulled some of himself together. "You bitch! You cheated on me?!" He shouted, catching the attention of one of the guards inside the building. How did I not notice them when I came in?

"Sorry I was late, baby. I was caught up in some work." I lied keeping up the act and keeping Rick confused as the guard came over. Rick was in utter shock.

"How could you do this to me, Ves!? We had something special!" Rick kept shouting. Ves took another sip of her drink and gave Rick a look I couldn't interpret.

"Rick, we were never together." Ves spoke, unamused with his drunken fit. The guard finally arrived.

“Sir, I’m going to have to ask you to leave, or I will remove you.” The guard, another beefy ram, threatened. Rick looked at the guard, snarled, and stomped out of the building. Ves sighed in relief as the guard returned to his spot near the dance floor.

“Thank the stars you showed up when you did.” Ves said as she released my arm and downed the rest of her drink.

“You’re welcome. I just wanted to see if I could help.” I replied. Ves took a seat on a bar stool and patted one next to her. I sat down in the the stool.

“Get this boy a stiff one.” Ves called out to a bartender, then she turned to me. “So, what’s your name, sweetie?” She asked.

“My... name? I do not have one yet.” I replied. How could I have overlooked this detail!? Ves gave me a look of suspicion and curiosity.

“What do you mean by ‘don’t have one yet’?” Ves asked, sitting her empty glass down. What is the best way to get through this situation? I could tell her the truth, but that might end badly. I could also lie, but that would complicate any kind of relationship that may happen. Truth it is.

“Well, I am a synthetic construct. I was recently built and discarded. Since I was never properly activated, I was never given a name.” I informed her. My brief story seemed to make Ves uncomfortable. The bartender set my drink in front of me then went to go tend to another customer. I looked at the drink and my systems highlighted the drink and began to analyze the contents. It consisted of approximately 20% vodka, 50% apple juice, 15% gin, 10% apple schnapps, and 5% lime juice and had an overall alcohol content of 30%. Indeed this is what one could call a “stiff drink”.

“Jeez, I might need another drink to believe you.” Ves sighed as she grabbed my drink up and took a sip from it. I frowned slightly at the loss of my first drink.

“I suppose I could just show you.” I said, somewhat absent-mindedly. At that comment, Ves set her drink down and actually looked at me.

“Do it. You won’t.” She challenged me. I nodded and pressed a small button on the underside of my wrist. With a soft hiss, a panel opened up, exposing wires, servos, and tubes with cooling fluids. Ves grabbed my arm and brought it close to her face. She stared at as if it was the freakiest thing she had seen, and it probably was.

“Of all my years exploring kinks as a adult entertainer... this is definitely something different...” She spoke, sounding as if she hadn’t meant to say that aloud. Ok... Maybe it isn’t the freakiest thing she has seen.

“So that is what you do?” I asked. This is an awkward conversation already. Ves shoved a finger into my forearm and started jostling the wires around. In response, my hand began to spaz out.

“Yea. I have sex for a living. So what?” Ves replied defensively. In her frustration, she disconnected some of the wires and my hand went limp.

Well... I’ll need to do some repairs.

“I wasn’t going to judge, but since I just lost feeling in my hand, I might hold it against you.” I said as I pulled my hand away from the brute of a cow. I held up my arm and used my good hand’s index finger to begin reattaching the disconnected wires. The tip of the finger split apart and smaller pincer like tendrils came out to reconnect the wires. Ves just watched with fascination.

“I go to see this, so... I couldn’t care less.” Ves said. I rolled my eyes and waited until the wires were reconnected. Which took about five minutes, and Ves was absorbed with simply repair the whole time. Once the wires were reattached to their sockets, I willed my hand to move and it did. Satisfied with the repairs, I closed the hatch and let my hands rest on the bar.

“No more wires for you.” I told Ves. She just shrugged and downed the rest of the drink in one gulp. Then she frowned slightly and groaned. I took her arm, which she didn’t even respond to me touching, and a small needle extended from my index finger. I love being equipped with a range of tools. I gently inserted the needle into a vein in her wrist and waited for results. Moments later, the results came back, telling me that she was drunk.

*Very drunk.*

“Ves, we need to get you home.” I spoke in my confident monotone as I retracted the needle. Ves giggled and swayed unsteadily. She started to fall over, but I reached out and caught her. I shook my head. It was... heartbreaking to see her like this. Too many dangerous possibilities.

“Oh~ Hellooooo handsome~” Ves cooed out. I chuckled and stood from my chair. I scooped up the drunk cow into my arms, cradling her like a baby. She drunkenly wrapped her arms around my neck and started mumbling incoherently.

“Please, I am but of average looks.” I said humbly. Of course, it is illogical to even try to reason with an intoxicated person. Ves shook her head furiously and blushed.

“I... I want to have your children!” Ves shouted as I carried her towards the door. My... children? Am I even capable of creating children? I just shook my head at the thought.

“Yes, you need to calm down.” I said to her softly. She seemed to acknowledge the request and she quieted down. I exited the building and look both ways down the sidewalk. I wonder if she is sober enough to lead the way to her home.

“Which way is home?” I asked the now wiggling cow. Does this always happen when she gets drunk? She seems to have become a flustered child. She seems nervous and the wiggling only helps say that her nervousness is controlling her.

“It’s... um... 73 Black Peak Drive.” She said nervously. Her speech isn’t too slurred, if at all, and she seemed willing to give me her address. She is definitely drunk, but not to the point where she just can’t control herself.

After my systems found a route to the address, I nodded and started that way. Along the way, we passed a market place. I saw stalls selling fruits, vegetables, cheeses, and many different slices of meat. I wished I could stop and browse, but I had a responsibility now.

“Yes, you wouldn’t mind taking me to the market later, would you?” I asked. There was no response and a wetness on my arm. I looked down as I walked and was met with a... an adorable sight. Ves had passed out in my arms and was drooling in her sleep. I suppose that the drool isn’t very cute, as it is on my arm, but... is that not the way of life?

After about a twenty minute walk, I finally arrived at 73 Black Peak Drive. The house was much like the ones around it. It was two stories and the wood was painted grey. It looked depressing on the outside. I approached the dark wood door and realised that I not only had a person in my arms, but I also had no key to get into the house.

Ves reached into her bra and pulled out a key. I guess that was one way to keep track of stuff. I set the drunk girl on her shaky feet and took the key from her grasp. I was inserting the key into the keyhole when Ves noticed I had the key.

“Hey! \*hicc\* das~ meh key~!” She whispered angrily at me. I kept my focus on opening the door. By the time I had opened the door, the drunk cow had hit me in the head three times. Each time she was the one who got hurt.

“Ves, I need you to calm down.” I said smoothly. Maybe I could calm her, probably not. Ves huffed and smacked me on the back of the head.

“Calm mehshelf!? I’ll show you calm!” Ves slurred.

This was getting a little old. Scooping up the drunken cow, I rushed into the house and into her room. Or at least a room with a bed in it. I dropped her on the bed, left the room, and closed the door before she realised what happened. I closed and locked the front door just be safe, then went to the couch and plopped down on it. My first day in the world and I made friends with a drunk. Better than no friends at all. With that as my final thought, I entered rest mode.

(To be continued when I can \*.^)