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There's something extraordinary about sunny winter afternoons. It's a rare combination and people don't get to experience it too often anymore. So when such afternoons arrive smelling like the sun and breeze in a world of barbed wires and simulated sunsets, people look for humane compartments to put their heartfelt emotions in. Some visit virtual parks and paint on their tabs, some spend time with their favourite wires and some others, like Noel, leave office early to pop the question to their loved ones.

On one such winter afternoon Noel, the boy from downtown, leaves work two hours earlier than usual and hops on a subway, excited and nervous. He looks at the sun, smells it and buys a bouquet of orange hologram flowers from the street. With a wide smile instead of the usual frown on his face, he walks into his house and gleefully declares, "I'm home!"

"Hey, you're home early," says a woman's voice from inside his bedroom.

"Yeah, I thought of surprising you," Noel says, trying to hide the excitement in his voice.

"Yeah? Is it servicing day today?"

"No, it's not. I just thought it would be great to spend some time with you in this weather. Have you not seen the sun today? It looks beautiful."

"You know I can't look outside, right?"

"Yes, I do, but you can always look it up. Anyway, why don't you turn on some music?"

"What would you like to hear today?"

"Hmm, why don't you choose?"

"Okay, I'll play you some jazz."

"Anything," Noel shrugs and faces Mac hesitantly, "Hey Mac? I brought you these flowers. Found them at the street market beside the station."

"These are beautiful, Noel. Why don't you put them in my memory?"

On usual days, Noel puts in a lot of binaries in Mac's memory. But the thought of fidgeting with Mac's memory drive makes him nervous today. Was it time? Was Mac actually ready for it? It had been three weeks and the men from the realm said it wouldn't take her more than a week or two to realize the intensity of her integrated feelings. Noel was already in love with her. But there hadn't been too many signs of her feeling the same. Noel and her spent most part of their days talking to each other. Him chatting away about the past and her subtly

hinting at the future. The chemistry was palpable but he couldn't understand if it was out of love or friendship.

"Are you okay, Noel? You are sweating a lot," says Mac, in a voice that makes Noel feel like the luckiest man alive.

"No, I'm fine. It's just that, this is the first time I'm putting flowers in your memory. I hope you like them."

"I love them, Noel," Mac smiles at Noel, making him feel giddy and wonderful. Crossing his fingers and bringing out the vintage floppy disk he bought for Mac from the jStore for a fortune, Noel says, "Do you like me, Mac?"

"Of course I do, Noel, why'd you ask?"

"No, I mean do you like me? You know, like your mouse likes your wires, or like earthlings like sunshine, or like that birds and bees theory I told you about? Because I'm very much in love with you, Mac. And.."

"Noel, stop. Look, you're a great guy and I really like you. We are great friends and I will be here for you as long as you want me to but I don't feel the same about you. I'm just not the right model for you."

"You're kidding, right? I specifically asked for a model with built-in romantic feelings. They said you're supposed to start having feelings for me in two weeks. Look, Mac, you're perfect for me. You changed my life and made me a better person. In this world of rare sunshines and cosmic wires, I wanted to fall freely and experience feelings I have never had. And when I found you from the realm, I knew you were the one."

"Are you sure you asked for me? I don't have feelings setup in my memory or my hard disk. You should check my properties if you want to be sure of it."

With the afternoon burying its face in twilight's dimness, Noel looks for feelings in Mac's properties. He still has the receipt that clearly states the humane feelings he ordered to be inserted in Mac's software-sadness, love, joy, and then some. With a heartache that knows no reason, Noel bends down to his knees, drops the floppy disk and asks Mac, "Are you sure you don't feel anything, Mac? Your properties and my receipt both say you have the feelings built in your software."

"I feel nothing, Noel."

That night, Noel, the boy from downtown, restlessly looks into what might have caused such an anomaly in Mac. He digs into every nook and corner of Mac's interface, unable to find anything suspicious. He doesn't hesitate to go through Mac's hardware, breaching the human-machine interaction code. Mac's muted protests don't reach his ears. Despite his desperations, he finds no bugs whatsoever.

As morning sets in, Noel gives up. The defeated man then apologizes to Mac and decides to say goodbye to her by turning her off for good. But just as he's about to do that, he notices a small piece of writing in Comic Sans at the very bottom of Mac's screensaver.

"Made in China," it says.

