

Nuts, Bolts, and Trash

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EXT. CITY ROAD, NIGHT

Opens to a busy city night life in a cyberpunk future. Buildings are as high as the eye can see and on every building there are brightly colored billboards. There are hologram projections of ads in the night sky. There are people walking around with someone else or a robot.

Alone in an alleyway is NIK, hiding from people. Nik's wearing a dark trench coat with a hood and random buckles; with matching cargo pants and boots. Nik has a permanent frown on his face and he's tightly holding onto an empty duffel bag that is over his shoulder.

When the coast is clear, Nik runs out of the alley way and crosses several streets to get to the outskirts of the city. We see several ads as Nik runs.

Some ads are for purchasing robots and what they say are as follows: "SPEND MORE TIME WITH THOSE YOU LOVE, GET A KL2.0 TODAY"; "WANT A CHILD THAT WILL LISTEN? GET THE PERFECT CHILD WITH THE C1.2!".

EXT. JUNKYARD, NIGHT

Nik reaches his destination of the junkyard. There are floodlights that scan over the area. Nik is able to easily avoid getting caught by these lights as he goes deeper into the junkyard.

NIK

(mutters)

Fucking guards. Can't they just take a break?

Nik reaches the part of the junkyard that only has decommissioned robots and other electronics. Nik carefully watches the floodlights. Once the floodlights stop watching the area Nik is in, Nik gets out of hiding and he sets up his duffel bag on the ground.

Nik starts to go through the robots and electronics. He inspects every single component before he either tosses the component or puts it into the duffel bag.

Nik reaches one robot that is still fully together. However, when Nik reaches to grab the robot, the robot turns on and comes back to life. This robot is KL1NK who speaks in a broken robotic voice.

KL1NK is an older looking robot with a very boxy shape. KL1NK has a simple looking face, but with the eyes having LED lighting and KL1NK having eyebrows, they're very expressive.

KL1NK

Hello! I am K-L-1-N-K, how may I be of service?

Nik jumps back.

NIK

Jesus Christ!

KL1NK

I don't know who that is.

NIK

Just shut up you klinky bastard.

KL1NK

Klinky bastard? I'm confused.

Nik sighs and rubs his face.

NIK

Look, can you just shut up Klink.

KL1NK

Klink? Is that my name?

Nik looks so annoyed with KL1NK.

NIK

Fuck it, sure.

KL1NK makes some happy beeps and boops.

KL1NK

I have a name now! Thank you. What's your name?

Nik shushes KL1NK

NIK

That doesn't matter. Now shut up so we don't get caught.

KL1NK tilts their head.

KL1NK

Why doesn't it matter? You're my friend.

NIK

Oh my god. Look if I tell you my name will that make you happy?

KL1NK nods.

NIK

Fuck it, fine. It's Nik. Happy now?

KL1NK quickly nods.

KL1NK

Very much! It's nice to meet you Nik.

NIK

(mutters to himself)

Oh my god he's going to get me killed.

KL1NK tries to stand up but they quickly fall back onto the ground, which causes a loud rattling sound.

Floodlights go towards the area Nik and KL1NK.

NIK (cont'd)

Shit!

Nik drops to the ground to hide from the lights. His coat helps Nik blend in with the ground. When the floodlights finish searching the area, it moves onto the next area.

KL1NK

What's that?

Nik slowly stands up.

NIK

(very annoyed)

That is what will get me killed if you don't
quiet down and shut up.

KL1NK hangs their head down.

KL1NK

Oh, I don't want to get you killed. I just want to talk to you.

Nik takes a deep breath.

NIK

I know, but you have to be quiet.

KL1NK

(whispers)

What if I talk like this?

Nik thinks for a moment.

NIK

Fuck it, sure.

KL1NK looks a lot happier now. Nik rolls his eyes and he goes back to inspecting and gathering electronic parts. Nik doesn't look up at KL1NK for the next part of the conversation.

KL1NK

What are you doing?

NIK

Gathering stuff.

KL1NK

What kind of stuff?

NIK

Electronics.

KL1NK

Why?

NIK

Because.

KL1NK

Because why?

Nik stops what he's doing and looks at KL1NK.

NIK

Are you always this annoying?

KL1NK

What's annoying?

Nik sighs.

NIK

You know, for a robot, you're very stupid.

KL1NK

Oh! My old owners would call me that. I know what it means.

Nik raises an eyebrow.

NIK

Do you?

KL1NK nods.

NIK (cont'd)

I guess I'll believe you then.

KL1NK has a look of wonder and awe.

KL1NK

You believe in me?

Nik looks confused.

NIK

Uh, yeah. Why wouldn't I?

KL1NK

My old owners never did.

NIK

Oh. Uh, sorry about that.

KL1NK

It's okay. I have you now.

Nik looks awkward.

NIK

(uncertainly)

I guess you do.

Nik goes back to gathering and inspecting electronics.

In the distance there are a couple of gunshots and dogs barking. This causes Nik to hide beside KL1NK.

NIK (cont'd)

(mutters)

Shit.

KL1NK

(whispers)

What was that?

NIK

The guards caught someone going through the trash.

KL1NK looks at Nik with a concerned look.

KL1NK

What? Why would they do that?

NIK

People aren't supposed to be here so guards
kill them.

KL1NK

But you're here?

NIK

I am.

KL1NK

But why? Dying is bad for your health.

Nik hesitates to answer.

NIK

I need the money.

KL1NK

Why?

NIK

Well, I lost my house and my job. So, I kinda need it.

KL1NK

Why?

Nik is starting to look agitated.

NIK

I swear to God if you answer with why one more time.

KL1NK hangs their head down low.

KL1NK

Sorry.

Nik sighs.

NIK

It's okay. You don't know.

Nik pats KL1NK's shoulder. KL1NK perks back up.

KL1NK

Thank you.

Nik nods in acknowledgment. Nik and KL1NK sit in silence for a moment. Nik looks around to make sure that the coast is clear before he gets back to gathering electronics.

KL1NK (cont'd)

Is it safe again?

Nik nods.

NIK

For now. I probably can't stay for much longer.

KL1NK

Oh. Already?

NIK

Yeah, sorry buddy.

KL1NK looks up at Nik with wide eyes and their eyebrows are raised up high.

KL1NK

Buddy?

NIK

Yeah, buddy.

KL1NK looks really excited.

KL1NK

(to themselves)

I'm a buddy.

Nik's duffel bag is almost full at this point. KL1NK looks over at the duffel bag.

KL1NK (cont'd)

(to Nik)

Why do you need so much money?

Nik has to stop himself from telling KL1NK to stop saying why.

NIK

Houses are expensive and I need out of this city.

KL1NK

Why?

Nik takes a moment to think about what to say next. He has stopped grabbing electronics.

NIK

I need a new life. I need an escape.

KL1NK

Is it bad here? I don't want to be here if it's
bad.

NIK Yeah, it's pretty bad here buddy. You heard how they just kill anyone without
question.

KL1NK

I thought everything was good if you're
human?

NIK Only if you're the right kind of person. I knew people that weren't the right kind.

KL1NK

Who were they? What happened to them?

Nik hesitates.

NIK

They were my wife and daughter... They got killed.

KL1NK

I'm sorry.

Nik takes a deep breath.

NIK

Thanks. It's nothing you can fix though. Only money and me leaving can fix this.

KL1NK

Okay...

KL1NK looks like they got an idea.

KL1NK

Can I maybe help by-

Before KL1NK can finish their sentence, there are some dog barks. The barks sound a lot closer than they were previously. Nik looks in the direction of the barks and he looks scared.

NIK

Shit, shit, shit, shit.

Nik stays low to the ground as he shoves any last-minute pieces of electronics into his duffel bag. He keeps looking over his shoulder towards the barks.

KL1NK

What's going on?

NIK

I got distracted. YOU distracted me. Fuck, I shouldn't have talked with you.

KL1NK

I'm sorry.

Nik looks frustrated.

NIK

You better be sorry.

There are a couple of guards with the dogs. The guards are shining flashlights towards Nik and KL1NK.

NIK (cont'd)

(rambling to himself)

I better not get caught. Not right when I am this close to getting out of this shit hole. I can't fuck up now.

Nik throws his duffel bag over his shoulder. Nik goes to run off but he doesn't realize that one of his random buckles on his coat got caught on one of the decommissioned robots. This causes Nik to fall over and makes the robot fall over with a clatter.

The guards and dogs run towards the noise. Nik now has no chance of being able to run away in time.

NIK (cont'd)

Fuck!

Nik looks down at the ground in defeat.

NIK (cont'd)

(mutters to himself)

I'm sorry for not being able to get out...For not getting you out before it was too late.

KL1NK quickly looks back and forth between Nik and the guards. KL1NK gets a look of determination as they struggle to stand up. Nik looks up at KL1NK with a confused look. KL1NK looks down at Nik.

KL1NK

Good luck.

KL1NK shakily walks away and they kick random trash as they leave. Nik quickly looks up at KL1NK.

NIK

(whisper yells)

Wait what? What the hell are you doing?

KL1NK

Helping.

KL1NK doesn't look back at Nik and instead, KL1NK just keeps walking away and causing noise. The guards' attention moves from the direction of Nik to KL1NK. The dogs dart towards KL1NK.

Nik stays still to make sure the guards and dogs don't notice him still there. Nik keeps a close eye on KL1NK.

NIK

(mutters)

He's so fucking stupid... It's not worth it. Why's he even doing this for me of all people?

Nik watches as the dogs end up catching up to KL1NK. KL1NK looks behind themselves to see the dogs right as they jump onto KL1NK. KL1NK falls to the ground and the dogs attack KL1NK. The dogs cause KL1NK to have even more damage. We don't see the full extent of the damage yet.

Nik looks worried and like he wants to help KL1NK out. Nik stays hidden as he slowly and quietly army crawls towards KL1NK. Nik leaves the duffel bag behind. The guards catch up with the dogs. GUARD 1 grabs his baton and shoos the dogs off KL1NK.

GUARD 1

Alright, get off of him.

The guards look down at KL1NK.

GUARD 2

Are you kidding me? It's just some robot.

Guard 1 sighs.

GUARD 1

I guess so.

Guard 2 whistles for the dogs to come back to him.

GUARD 2

Come on, let's head out.

The guards and dogs head out. Nik crawls faster towards KL1NK. When the guards and dogs are fully out of view, Nik stands up to get to KL1NK faster. Nik drops to his knees when he reaches KL1NK.

KL1NK is in rough shape. There's some exposed wire on KL1NK that's causing sparks. There are parts of their body that have been ripped off and the parts include; arm, foot, metal plating,

NIK

Klink?

KL1NK shakily looks over at Nik. KL1NK's speech is more crackly and some words are skipped as their voice box was damaged.

KL1NK

T-Told you. Help-.

KL1NK gives Nik a thumbs up with the arm that is still attached, but as soon as a thumbs up is given the hand falls off.

NIK

That was really fucking stupid of you.

KL1NK

Not stupid. I can- die.

Nik sighs.

NIK

I'm assuming you mean you can't die. But you can and you're lucky that you didn't.

Nik pauses.

NIK (cont'd)

But I'm happy you didn't.

KL1NK looks really happy and they make some beeps and boops. Though the beeps and boops sound a lot less energetic and happy than they did previously. In the background, the sun starts to rise.

NIK

Come on now, let me pick you up. I think I grabbed a voice box earlier.

KL1NK

Fix?

NIK

Yes I'm going to fix you. The least I can do for you saving me.

Nik thinks for a moment.

NIK (cont'd)

And I guess I should also repair a few other things on you to make up for the fact that I yelled at you.

KL1NK

I get yelled- a lot. Nothing different.

NIK

Just let me fix you as a way of saying sorry
without me having to actually say it.

KL1NK

You just did.

Nik pauses.

NIK

Shit. Well that's it, I'm not fixing your voice box.

Nik picks up KL1NK and throws KL1NK over his shoulder.

KL1NK

You'll regret it.

NIK

Maybe, maybe not.

Nik carries KL1NK back to where Nik left the duffel bag behind.

NIK

It'll make our trip out of the city a lot quieter.

KL1NK

You're taking me?

NIK

Well I ain't leaving a perfectly functional robot in the dump. So it's either the streets or with me and seeing that you do dumb shit, I have to keep an eye on you.

KL1NK

You do dumb-

Nik cuts off KL1NK.

NIK

No swearing. And I do it, because I've lived longer than you and done more. And I haven't gotten caught yet.

KL1NK

Because I watch- you.

Nik smiles.

NIK

Yeah you do buddy.

Nik and KL1NK reach back to where the duffel bag is. Nik grabs the duffel bag and he does struggle to throw it over his shoulder that KL1NK isn't on. Nik walks off into the sunrise.