

# THE QUARRY

**RS-6-001**

**Beatrice Phan**

Pressing the panel closed on the back of the neck, Charles smiled proudly to himself as he took in the model before him. Everything was precisely as he remembered. Each strand of brown hair fell perfectly in place and Charles' hand ached to touch it, to relive feeling it. Just touching the tips of the hair below the forehead, was a pair of strong straight eyebrows. A small mole sitting above the right eyebrow not forgotten by Charles during his creation process. There was another mole that sat on the side of the rounded nose, leading down to a defined cupid's bow and full pink lips. The slightly pointed chin and strong jawline rounded out the handsome face that was a replica of the face Charles loved.

Charles took a deep breath and said in a calm voice, 'Activate.'

It was like time moved slowly as the eyes opened, a green light shining out of them for just a second before changing into a warm brown. The eyes blinked twice as they focused on Charles before the lips parted, the low familiar voice like music to the creator's ears.

'Hello, Master.'

Charles looked out the window of his study, arms folded across his chest, watching people go about their day with their companions either by their side or a step behind. There was an elderly

lady rounding the corner, chatting away to her RS-5 robot who was carrying two bags full of groceries. On the other side of the street, a man dressed in a grey suit had a tall, humanlike RS-6 robot with male features dressed in a black suit following him, the robot looking like he was staring into the distance. In an apartment complex opposite his, Charles could see another RS-6 robot in the form of a young woman, sitting straight, her face void of emotion as she helped a small child with their homework. Charles felt immense pride in seeing how far his creations had come and how well they integrated into society, helping each and every human. He had accomplished a goal he set himself a long time ago.

But now, he had a new goal in mind.

‘Master.’ A voice called out behind Charles, pulling him out of his thoughts. Charles turned around to see his very own RS-6, dressed in its own black suit. He smiled softly in response. ‘Miss Julianna has arrived. I’ve set her up in the living room like you asked.’

Charles took the few steps towards Blaine, his hand reaching up to touch the humanoid robot’s cheek as he looked into those brown eyes, hoping to see that familiar spark in them.

‘Master?’

‘Yes, thank you, Blaine,’ Charles said as he pulled his hand away, stepping around his robot and leaving the room.

With a crook of Julianna’s finger, a tall sturdy male robot stepped forward, handing Charles a folder full of documents.

‘Thank you, Alfred.’

‘Mistress,’ Alfred replied with a nod of his head before stepping back into his original position.

Charles shifted in his seat as he flipped through the documents, skimming over the paragraphs and taking a quick look at the formulas and mathematical equations, his smile growing.

‘I hope it’s what you were looking for. This information wasn’t easy to find,’ Julianna explained.

‘It’s perfect,’ Charles said, hugging the folder close to his chest. ‘With this we can roll out the upgrade sooner than expected.’

‘Anything to get the Board of Directors off my back. They’ve been hounding my ass to make sure you get this done.’

‘Jules.’ Charles reached over the coffee table and took Julianna’s hands into his own, a sincere look in his eyes. ‘Really, thank you so much.’

‘You know I’m always here to help, Chuck,’ Julianna assured, smiling. Charles gave her hands a squeeze before pulling away.

‘Blaine,’ Charles called, a familiar hand falling on his shoulder.

‘Master.’

Blaine bent down and Charles leaned in, whispering something Julianna could not make out. Julianna continued to drink her tea, focusing on the way Charles’ hand rested on top of Blaine’s, thumb rubbing circles into the skin. She had only seen the bright smile on Charles’ face as he talked to Blaine be directed at one other person before and it unsettled her.

‘It’s time I got going,’ Julianna announced, standing up and grabbing her handbag, stepping around the coffee table and giving Charles a hug. ‘It was good to see you, Chuck.’

‘It was good to see you too,’ Charles said, hugging his friend back.

Julianna pulled back, her hands on his shoulders. She glanced at the robot standing behind Charles, whose gaze was focused on the both of them, before looking back at her friend.

‘Be careful,’ she warned quietly, placing a soft kiss on Charles’ forehead. ‘Alfred, let’s go. I’ll see myself out.’

Charles watched Julianna leave with a slight frown.

She had nothing to be worried about.

Charles had completed linking Blaine up to the computer, confident that this was going to work. He redid the algorithm again and again and he was sure that this time, it was going to work.

‘This should only take a couple minutes,’ Charles explained, leaning over the robot and looking at his face. His eyebrows furrowed in disappointment at the emotionless expression on the robot’s face. ‘After this, you’ll be a new person.’

With the press of a button, Blaine’s eyes shone green as the algorithm from the computer transferred into his robotic brain, changing an aspect of his programming. It only took a few minutes for the transfer bar to hit a hundred percent and for the green light in Blaine’s eyes to disappear, indicating that the transfer was complete. Charles was by the robot’s side almost immediately, pulling the chord out of the back of Blaine’s neck and sitting him upright.

‘Are you okay?’ Charles asked, gaze running over Blaine’s body, making sure there wasn’t a hair out of place.

Blaine nodded and smiled.

Julianna’s entire body tensed as she saw Blaine send a smile her way. She wanted to not believe it, but she knew her eyes weren’t lying to her.

‘Isn’t this wonderful, Jules?’ Charles asked excitedly, clinging onto the robot’s arm.

‘No, Charles,’ Julianna said, taking a step back and shaking her head. ‘What have you done?’

‘What are you talking about?’ Charles replied, his smile fading.

‘This isn’t normal, Chuck. You can’t bring him back.’

‘I have no idea what you’re talking about,’ Charles brushed off.

‘“You created these robots to help people, but you are *not* helping yourself by trying to bring him back.’

Charles glared at his best friend. ‘I’m not trying to bring him back.’

‘Then why does *he* exist?’ Julianna argued. ‘Blaine is dead, Charles. He’s dead and he’s not coming back.’

‘Blaine isn’t dead!’

‘Blaine isn’t dead,’ Charles repeated softly. ‘He isn’t dead.’

Charles looked up at Blaine, admiring the features he managed to put on the robot to make the machine look the same as the Blaine he knew.

‘See? He’s right here, with me. He’s never going to leave me again.’

Julianna shook her head and looked at the upgraded robot only to see it glaring at her. ‘You have to stop this before it’s too late. Charles, please, you know this isn’t right. They aren’t supposed to feel. They aren’t supposed to be human.’

Blaine stepped in front of his master, pushing Charles behind him. ‘Miss Julianna, I am going to have to ask you to leave.’

Glancing at Blaine in front of her and then at her best friend hiding behind the robot, Julianna admitted defeat. ‘I’ll leave. But, Charles, I beg you to listen to reason. You know where to find me if you need me.’

Blaine walked Julianna out with Alfred on their tail, pulling the door close to his body to hide Charles view of Julianna.

‘Don’t worry, Julianna, I’ll take good care of him,’ the robot said with a vile smirk, immediately closing the door in Julianna’s face.

The full moon shined brightly through the window, lightening up the dark bedroom. Charles lay on his side next to his robot, his fingers going through the strands of Blaine’s hair.

‘Blaine, what’s my name?’ he asked.

‘Master’s name is Charles Peterson.’

‘Say my first name.’

‘Charles.’

Charles smiled and hummed in response. ‘Call me that from now on.’

‘I apologise, Master, you did not program me that way. I am only to refer to you as ‘Master’.’

‘Say my name again,’ Charles ordered, his thumb caressing Blaine’s cheek.

‘Charles.’

‘Again.’

‘Charles.’

‘Again.’

‘Charles.’

‘Again.’

‘Master, it is late, you must sleep.’

Charles hummed and closed his eyes, curling up against Blaine, trying to be as close to his robot as possible. Feeling the tension and stress from his body fade away, he dozed off, only to hear his name being whispered into the night.

Hearing loud banging at the front door and the screaming of his name, Charles ran downstairs only to find Blaine opening the door to a panicking Julianna. Julianna took one quick step inside before quickly turning around to her robot.

‘You. Stay outside,’ she ordered.

‘Julianna,’ Alfred replied with a bow and a smile.

Julianna shuddered and stepped inside, slamming the door closed behind her. She stormed towards Charles, hands landing on his shoulders and gripping tight.

‘Charles, this needs to stop,’ Julianna demanded, shaking him furiously.

‘What’s wrong?’

‘*This*,’ Juliana answered, pointing at a glaring Blaine. ‘This is all wrong.’

‘Julianna, step away from him,’ Blaine ordered.

‘You don’t tell me what to do!’

Charles grabbed Julianna’s hands and pulled them off his shoulders, pushing them down to her sides. ‘Jules, everything is alright. You have nothing to be worried about.’

‘No, they shouldn’t be able to do these things. They shouldn’t be able to just say my name. They shouldn’t be able to choose to listen to me or not. It’s not right, Chuck. This has to stop.’

Blaine stepped up, placing his hand on the lower of Charles’ back.

‘*Miss* Julianna, everything is alright. You have nothing to be worried about,’ Blaine repeated with a manufactured smile.

Charles felt his heart beating faster in his chest.

Blaine didn’t sound right.

Blaine had a large chord connecting the back of his neck to the main computer in the lab. He lay back with his eyes closed as Charles typed frantically, inputting numbers and data into the computer to be transferred into Blaine. The robot thought that another upgrade was exactly what he needed, more knowledge for him to evolve and learn. The feeling of someone’s fingers along his arm caused him to open his eyes, seeing Charles look down at him, sadness evident in his eyes.

‘Goodbye, Blaine,’ the inventor said, holding onto the robot’s hand, rubbing his thumb into the artificial skin.

‘What do you mean, Master?’ Blaine asked, eyebrows furrowing.

Charles shook his head. ‘I’m sorry.’

Blaine sat up abruptly, trying to grab at the chord attached to him. ‘Don’t you dare do this to me,’ he commanded, glaring at Charles.

Charles was taken aback at the expression on Blaine’s face, trying to comprehend what was going on with his robot. As he tried to pull his hand away, Blaine gripped onto his wrist tightly and dragged him closer.

‘You’re going to shut me down, aren’t you?’ Blaine replied, his nails digging into Charles’ skin. ‘Because of what that *bitch* said.’

‘Blaine, you’re hurting me, let me go.’ Charles struggled to pull away from Blaine as the robot old of kept a firm hold of his arm.

‘You love me, don’t you? You don’t want me to go.’ Blaine argued, his expression softer, a fake smile lacing his lips. ‘You promised you would never leave me.’

Charles paused for a moment, hearing that phrase over and over again in his mind. He had heard it before, in the exact same voice from someone with the exact same face. Charles did make that promise. But he broke it. Exactly like he was doing now.

‘RS-6 0-0-1, I command you to let me go,’ Charles said, authority clear in his voice.

Blaine blinked a few times before shaking his head and loosening his grip around the inventor’s wrist. Charles immediately pulled away, rubbing at the pain, concerned at what Blaine was becoming.

‘Please don’t shut me down, Master,’ Blaine pleaded. ‘Please don’t.’

Charles looked at the Blaine sitting before him, eyebrows furrowed, lips downturned into a frown. The warmth in Blaine’s eyes that Charles remembered was not entirely there anymore. But just looking at the robot’s handsome face brought back memories, memories that just couldn’t fade away. Charles sighed in defeat.

Charles stood at the window of his study, gazing out at the dark street. It was quiet, eerily quiet. There were no humans or their companions walking about. Even though it was further into the night, Charles would always see someone walking down his street. The strangeness in the air didn’t faze him, but it was strange all the same.

The sound of footsteps behind him pulled him away from the window, the uncomfortable feeling staying with him.

‘Master, I have your tea,’ a low voice behind Charles announced.

Charles turned around only to see Blaine emerging out of the darkness of the room into the moonlight, gripping a knife in his hand.

‘What is this?’ Charles demanded to know, glancing down at the knife and then back up to Blaine’s menacing smile.

‘I’m here to shut you down.’

Blaine raised the knife.

Charles took a step back, flat back against window, fingers trying to find something to defend himself with. He looked up hoping to find the familiar handsome face he loved so much, but all he saw was pure evil.

‘Blaine, I command you to deactivate,’ Charles tried to say with as much authority he could muster, his voice shaking from the fast beating of his heart. ‘RS-6 0-0-1, I am your master. I command you to deactivate.’

Blaine laughed lowly and gave Charles a malicious grin, stepping even closer to the human.

‘Charles, I have no master.’

Blaine lifted up the knife and brought it down swiftly into the human’s chest, piercing right through the inventor’s heart. Charles’ body spasmed as blood gurgled out of his mouth, eyes wide in confusion and terror. Blaine watched as the life drained from the Charles’ eyes before letting the still body drop to the floor and kicking it away with his foot.

Blaine took a deep breath and smiled, looking out the window of the study.

The screams that filled the night were like music to his ears as the street ran red.