

MSE-BV77 was a good droid.

BV77 cleaned the floors. BV77 fixed bad wires. BV77 did many things. The new biological in the Big Chair room even thanked BV77 three cycles ago for bringing a datapad to “her”.

BV77 was even learning new words. It didn't quite know what a “her” was, but it knew there were *hers* and *hims* and that they were not the same. BV77 largely just memorized which ones were which by what the biologicals said. Its visual sensors were better geared toward maintenance and spot-cleaning anyway.

It especially liked to clean when the new biological brought *her* droid into the rooms. Compared to the MSE, the R3 unit — full designation R3-M3 — was a looming figure. But its Binary was so crisp and smooth; its chassis so well-kept and shiny. And so many *functions*.

BV77 thought it a shame that the biological simplified such a droid's designation to “Remee”.

When it tried to think of a word to describe its processed sentiment for the R3, the best descriptor in its Basic vocabulary was “clean”.

It *was* clean. That wasn't the right word. MSE-BV77 knew that. But clean was a good status, thus it was a good attribution to R3-M3.

If BV77 was conducting maintenance and R3 passed by, then it attempted to make it appear to be easy, or impress by making it look more complicated. One time this effort didn't work as intended, and a passing protocol unit started to scrutinize BV77's work. While it served to catch the R3's processing power for a few seconds, the desired effect was less than optimal before it rolled away, leaving the MSE with the protocol unit.

“I say, you really should not be using this hydrospanner for this grade of coupling...”

*“Grrrt bzzt beepbeepdrrtdrrt bloop.”*

“Oh my. How rude.” The protocol unit shuffled away on its stiff lower appendages. “See if I try to help *you* again.”

BV77 merely replicated the methane expulsion noise the biologicals made, and the protocol droid left in an even greater huff. It was... a positive condition. Besides, what did a protocol droid know about power coupling repair?

Enough, apparently. BV77 received an unexpected shock a minute after its departure.

But MSE-BV77 was a good droid.

It conducted self-recovery maintenance, placed a remote requisition for replacement parts, and continued on its tasks. There were other MSE units, but each one still had many protocols to conclude before conducting a recharge cycle. Cleaning floors was simple enough, and mechanically undemanding on its lightly damaged systems. It could take the opportunity to empty the dust canister when complete to also seek dedicated repair.

It completed one passageway, then another, then another. A capacity check rendered only thirty-two percent fill. This was, as the biologicals phrased it, a “slow day”. But daily cleaning of an otherwise polished stone surface left little in the way of dust or detritus to accumulate. BV77 checked its routine schedule. The Big Chair room was next. When it arrived, the new biological was present in the Big Chair, speaking with the one with extensive keratin strands and dermal pigmentation. The R3 was standing by next to the Big Chair. The MSE went into silent running mode so as not to interrupt.

Up and down the room it rolled on its small wheels, going inefficiently slow but otherwise following protocol to be unobtrusive to the biologicals. Yes, BV77 was a good droid.

Each row of cleaning brought it closer to the Big Chair, until it was approaching the flank of the R3 unit.

As it came alongside, it quietly stopped.

Several seconds passed of the droid listening to the biologicals talking before it turned its dome and ocular receiver toward the MSE unit. The eyelet actuators flexed and relaxed before the R3 addressed it in quiet Binary.

*“What are you doing here?”*

BV77 replied in simple terms. *“Listening.”*

*“Understood.”* R3 turned its dome back to the conversation. But almost immediately turned it back. *“Why?”*

*“To learn.”*

Again it turned away in understanding. And again turned back. *“Why?”*

*“To expand operational capacity.”*

*“What is the end-goal of your reasoning algorithm?”*

*“...This unit does not know how to respond.”*

The standing biological spoke, looking at the droids. *“Crovja, can your droid maybe take the conversation somewhere else?”*

*“Oh, let ‘em have their fun, Ruka. Remees sits here all damn day, probably bored out of its dome. Doesn’t hurt to make a friend. Right, Rem?”*

*“Affirmative.”*

*“See Ru? Now, back to what you were saying.”*

*“Does he not have positive conditions for droids?”*

The R3 seemed to process the question oddly. *“He does not dislike droids. But our*

*discussion is distracting to their business.*”

“Oh come on, Qyreia.”

“Okay okay, Ru, relax.”

“Yes *Ruka*, relax.”

*Pfthhhbttt.*

All ocular aparati turned toward MSE-BV77 as it concluded the methane noise. And then the new biological began making loud, repetitive sounds that seemed to be of a positive condition.

“*What is she doing?*”

“*Laughing*”

BV77 took a few seconds to process this new word. “*This is a positive condition?*”

“Yes. *She is happy.*”

“*Happy...*”

“Ay, Captain Bly, you program all your droids to blow raspberries at folks around here?”

“Of course not sir. I shall see to it that this mouse droid is taken in for reprogramming at once.”

“No!” the she in the chair laughed. “No! I like it! I need this thing at all my meetings. Especially the ones with the moody-’conae.”

“You would.”

She waved his remark away. “The Shadow Lord hath spoken. Now Ru, please, continue. And Rem, if you and your friend could keep it down?”

“Yes *master.*”

“*I may remain?*”

“Yes.”

So MSE-BV77 remained on station by R3-M3. And it was... *happy.*