## **Clone #378**

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## Chapter one

She was spoiled. That's why Beta's parents let her get me, a clone. From what I know, she screamed and whined until her parents said yes. Humans are such gullible fools. Apparently she was bored of all her other friends and wanted a vision of herself as a pick-up for her self-esteem. Because I was her I would have the same DNA changes as she would. Everyday we would look the same. Unfortunately, she became bored of me as well. She must have thought that I was too free in thought.

The year is 2178 AD. There is technology to make clones and robots and all that futuristic stuff. Clones have no feelings, no dreams and no will. They are mostly made by the people who can afford it and are used as servants. You can tell that a person is a clone because they have a small tag on their chest with their clone number on it.

Mt. Rainer in Washington erupted in the year 2097. The mudflows and ash blocked many of the rivers, so people started to run out of water and fish. Cargo ships were sent to Japan to collect supplies for the survivors. There was a violent storm and they were sent way off course. Instead they came to a large island in the middle of the Pacific, just off the coast of Mexico. The island was lush and green and perfect for starting a brand new way of life. They named it after the biggest cargo ship, the Delta. Cities were built everywhere. Eventually an eco-dome, a large electronic dome made out of a special glass that filters out green-house gasses, was built over the island. The eco-dome also acted as a force field for unwanted scum. It would repel them from the island by creating an invisible shield over it and making it seem as though there was still ocean.

As I said that girl, Beta got a clone, me. I don't remember the day I was made, but the scientists love to exclaim over it. They call me "the sensitive one," probably because I'm the only clone alive with feelings and dreams. Now, you may be wondering why I said the scientists and not Beta and her parents. Well, Beta got tired of me after the first week because I would argue with her about things that she wanted me to do. Clones cannot die unless their donor dies. In my case, I can feel what Beta feels. If she falls off of a tree and scrapes her elbow, I'll clutch my elbow in pain even when I'm not in a tree. I get these pains very often, especially in my hands; probably from when she bangs her fists on her hard marble floors. Beta and I do not share feelings though.

Anyway, she told me to stay underwater for an hour. I refused to do it because I can not swim. She tried to push me in the water, I moved and she fell into the water. Beta screamed at her parents to take me back to the labs where I truly belonged. I've been here ever since.

Professor Gamma was the head scientist at the lab. He was always cheerful. He gave me a job in the

labs as a receptionist for visitors. No one ever came to me for service because I was a clone. There is a kind of social diversity between man and clone, much like the diversity of race and beliefs. I was a disgrace because I was created differently from the other clones. The professor was one of the only people in the lab that did not see me as a mere servant. I remember that Professor Gamma had built a computer he called Foxtrot, I do not know why he called it that. This computer processed all of the inventions for the island. Much of our technology and history was stored in Foxtrot as well. I hated the computer. The professor seemed to care more about that stupid computer than his experiments.

I also remember that boy who worked as Professor Gamma's assistant, Echo. I remember he would always teach me how to work certain machines just in case they were not there. He was my second favorite person at the lab. He called me by a certain name, Alpha.

"I just thought you needed name, after all, you can't be called Clone #378 forever, and Alpha was the first name I thought of." Echo said dully.

I also remember how he tugged at my curly red locks and made fun of my bright green eyes. Despite all of that, he had a good heart. The young scientist tried to defend me from some of his rioting peers. They had wanted to kill me because I was different. Echo and I escaped, he with a broken wrist and me with a bloody lip.

I have only asked him one question in the history of our friendship. Here's how it happened:

Echo was working on making a mini robot that could shoot lasers out of its battery pack to defend itself. I was sitting on the table next to him, correcting the klutzy young scientist when he made a mistake. One of the microbiologists came over to us when I started explaining Einstein's theory to Echo again.

"Hey Echo! Are you going out to the country side for the vacation?" he asked. Echo kept his eyes on his project. "Cause I was thinking about coming' over with you and spending' time with your family; I just thought that we should get to know each other better, since we're going to be colleagues."

Echo took off his safety goggles and stared at this man with a disgusted look on his face. "Nah, I'm not going back for a while." He mumbled.

The scientist scowled and swore under his breath. As he walked agitatedly away, he tripped over a desk leg and sent himself and the desk flying. Echo and I giggled silently while the man tried to untangle his leg from the desk.

"What did he mean when he said family?" I questioned, "What's a family?"

Echo look dumbstruck, clearing his throat he said, "Ah, well... um... you know when a mom and a dad love each other very much..."

I interrupted him, "I know that story, I just want to know what that man meant by family."

"I'm... ah... not sure I'm the one to... um... tell you that." Echo stuttered.