

Help wanted.

His fingers trembled with excitement as he unwrapped the machine. The PA-4. He liked how they'd changed the humanoid form. Why imitate us when the machine was clearly something else? He was about to clean up the packaging, but then thought it would be a nice little task for the PA-4 to begin with. The manual looked the same as the one for the previous edition. Most of it was probably company drivel about how they weren't liable in case of this and that. He turned the PA-4 on.

Hello.

It had a mellow husky voice, just like he ordered.

I am your new Personal Assistant. I am ready to serve.

Clean up the place. - He said.

Gladly. - The Machine responded.

53 minutes later his apartment was spick and span. He took a deep breath. It smelled like the high-end tech shop where he'd bought the PA-4. Though he could've ordered it from at home, the customization was less complicated with a shop bot meticulously taking care of everything.

Make Dinner. - He said.

By choice or random? - The PA-4 asked.

He was in the mood for a surprise.

Random is fine.

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3...

He was sweating profusely.

4...

The PA-4 was standing above him, gripping but not holding the bar. His arms were beginning to shake.

5...

He wanted to do one more, but the strain was unbearable. He tried to push and managed to lift the bar a few inches off his chest, but then he was stuck.

Remove the bar. - He conceded. As he was sitting there going back to when he would do 10 reps easily, the PA-4 said:

Would you like to try an enhancer?

That was new. What was an enhancer? He asked.

I am programmed to supply my owner with a medically and legally approved supplement, to aid in any endeavors meant to boost strength for work or exercise, improve the general well being and prevent illness or overcome a difficult task.

He thought for a moment. But if the drug or whatever it was the PA suggested, was legal and tested, what was the risk?

Yeah, let's do that.

The PA-4 produced a little cup and poured a liquid into it. As he drank it he felt shivers down his spine. They could've done something about the taste when they did it. But the effect was almost instant. He could feel renewed energy flowing through his veins.

Alright, let's try one more set.

He did 10 reps in fast even movements.

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I need another one Freddie. Enhance me.

Your quota for the day has expired.

He was struggling to complete his assignment. The client wanted a draft by tomorrow, but as per usual he had very little to go by: *Make it slick and awesome. Like what you've always dreamt of. Something which will make everyone go "Wow!"*.

If only they'd asked for efficient and financially viable. He thought it over. He'd used up his quota of enhancers from a strength perspective, so he could work longer and harder.

Listen Freddie. How about if I need an enhancer for a difficult task?

Gladly.

He'd found the loophole. Now he just had to expand on it.

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Sir, we're asking you for the last time. Open the door now!

Hear that Freddie? - he squashed the plastic cup – Just as I thought: They can't see what's really there. I've tried to tell them, but they resist being helped.

As he heard them banging on the door with their axes, he detonated the homemade explosives.

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The journalist was finishing his column:

In conclusion and in the face of the fact that our psychic wards are outcapacitated with these PA-4 addicts, we must reconsider our way of embracing the brave new world named augmented life. If we don't learn how to help ourselves, no other help will be of any use.

The end.