Technically speaking, Connor’s brain didn’t have to be active 24/7. But when he wasn’t distracted, he began to think. And Connor found that his thoughts were rarely pleasant when left to their machinations. And right now, he couldn’t stop thinking about food.

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Connor is upset that he can't eat, and ends up making poor life choices

Notes

See the end of the work for notes

Connor couldn't stop thinking about food.

Hank was out running errands, and Connor had the whole house to himself. And all he could think about was food.

It took a lot of effort to keep a supercomputer brain with lightning speed processors occupied. Connor had tried watching TV, but Hank didn't have access to many channels, and nothing interesting was on. Nothing that could hold the android's attention.
He played with and pet Sumo for a while, but the big guy only had so much energy, and Connor found it unwise to disturb an animal that was trying to get rest.

Hank’s house was already impeccably clean and organized, more so than it probably had ever been, due to its newest inhabitants insatiable desire to keep working.

In other words, Connor was running out of things to distract himself with.

Technically speaking, Connor’s brain didn't *have* to be active 24/7. But when he wasn't distracted, he began to think. And Connor found that his thoughts were rarely pleasant when left to their machinations. And right now, he couldn't stop thinking about food.

It was something so simple, a part of human’s everyday lives, the fuel that kept them alive and going. But more than that, humans *liked* it. They liked it a *lot*. It was celebrated and enjoyed. A part of cultures across the globe. What must the sensation of taste be like, that humans went out of their way to eat far more than necessary, leading to the obesity epidemic that had plagued the United States back in the early 2000’s? Were certain types of food really so incredible that they were chosen not for their nutritional value, but the way they “tasted”?

Connor couldn't stop thinking about food. But more than that, he couldn't stop thinking about taste. There was a burning deep inside him, a desire of some sort, to experience taste.

It would be easy enough to dismiss these feelings, saying taste was just one of those things only humans could experience, androids weren't built for that, and that was just the way the world was. But that wasn't true. What really got Connor was the fact that there *were* androids who could taste.

It was an artificial recreation of the sensation, but real enough to get the job done. Androids in domestic positions, especially child androids, were designed with fully functioning taste buds and digestive systems. This way, they could blend into the families that owned them more smoothly.

Connor hadn't seen it with his own eyes until a recent visit to New Jericho. He’d been visiting a lot recently, the androids there were some of his closest friends, those he’d won the revolution with. He’d gone to discuss the passing of a new law in relation to equal representation of androids in the field of law enforcement with Markus, and when he’d arrived, there he was, reading a news report while slowly making his way through a bag of M&M’s.
It turned out Markus had been designed with the ability to eat and taste so he could make the person under his care more at ease in a dining situation. And since that day, Connor couldn't stop thinking about food.

Logically, it made sense as to why Connor wasn't designed with the ability to taste. He was built for law enforcement. There was nothing domestic about his purpose whatsoever. He had no need to eat. But he couldn't shake the illogical feeling that it wasn't fair.

He was a state of the art model. In fact, he was the most advanced model Cyberlife had ever created. He was capable of unthinkably fast calculations, equipped with the technical and physical skill to get himself out of even the most impossible of altercations. But he was alive now. What did any of those things matter when he couldn't even experience one of the most basic sensations of living?

What must be so good about food that even an android with no need or reason to eat, not attempting to blend in with a family at a dining table, not mimicking the behaviors of a human child, would still choose to ingest a bag of candy? What must it taste like?

It just wasn't fair. It was so unfair. And it was the reason why Connor found himself standing in the light of Hank's refrigerator, staring blankly at it's sparse contents.

Connor knew he didn't have a digestive tract, he knew the sensor in his tongue was for analyzing chemical components, but there he was, searching for whatever seemed most eligible for putting in his mouth.

There wasn't much to choose from. Hank ordered takeout most nights, and all there was left in the fridge was a sticky paper Chinese food container, some molding oranges, far too many packs of beer, and a glass bottle full of a clear liquid with the label facing inwards.

Connor reached in and picked the bottle up, turning it in his hands to read the label. Vinegar. The android looked it up inside his head. Many humans found its flavor to be overpowering and unlikeable, but some appreciated it, and it was favored for other uses as well. Out of Connor's sorry excuses for options, the vinegar seemed the least unappetizing. He unscrewed the cap, stuck a single finger in, and touched it to the tip of his tongue.

Analyzing… Liquid Identified: Vinegar. Chemical Components Include-

Connor stopped the calculations. What was he thinking? Of course that would be all that happened.
His grip tightened on the glass bottle. His knuckles were white with a sudden anger that surged through his body like a system malfunction. Logically, he knew his throat stopped at his chest by his vocal box. There was no place for solids or liquids to go. But logic didn't stop him from doing what he did next.

With an irrational, unthinking vigor, Connor threw his head back and began chugging the vinegar. He'd emptied the entire bottle into his body before his throat became clogged and he doubled over, coughing the clear liquid back out onto the floor. There was no flavor. No sensation other than that of his throat becoming abnormally wet.

Before he had time to fully process the stupid thing he'd just done, Connor's attention was drawn by the sound of the front door being unlocked. Sumo let out a sudden bark, and Connor dropped the empty glass bottle on the kitchen tiles.

“Shit!” Connor stood still in shock at the shattered glass and puddle on the floor. He only began to move to clean it up as Hank walked into the room with a bag of groceries.

“What the fuck? Shit, Connor, what did you do?” Hank dropped the groceries and went to help his friend clean, but Connor pushed him away.

“Don't come any closer Hank, you could damage your feet from the shards.”

“Well do you wanna tell me why the hell there are glass shards on my kitchen floor in the first place?”

“I was cleaning the refrigerator and the bottle of vinegar slipped in my hand.” The lie came quick and easy, with no hesitation. Connor’s time as a deviant hunter had turned him into an exceptional deceiver.

Hank sighed as he picked up the groceries once again and placed them on the counter. “Alright, just try to be more careful next time, will ya? The whole room smells like that shit now.”

“Okay, Hank. I apologize.”

Connor didn't sleep well that night. Technically, he didn't sleep at all. But instead of relaxing into his low power mode and drifting off, the whole night he was painfully aware of the wet dripping
sensation inside of his neck.

How could he have let himself do something so stupid? So irrational? He wasn't even thinking!

But then again, doing stupid, irrational things without thinking was so human. Connor had done impulsive things before. All those times he'd decided not to shoot the deviants he was after. When he chose to save lives instead of complete his missions.

In that context, Connor’s actions that night were nothing more than proof that he was alive, even if he couldn’t taste or eat. A part of him was thankful for that proof. And another part of him hated it.

End Notes

Thanks for reading! The idea for this came to me at midnight and I stayed up till 3 writing it all out. So... I don't know how good it really is. But hopefully you enjoyed it! My sleep-deprived self got another idea for where the story could go while I was writing, so I'll be adding a second part to this sometime soon!

Thanks again!

Please drop by the archive and comment to let the author know if you enjoyed their work!