
“Unit, how long have you been serving with us?”

“Unit Sarah-06 has an uptime of: nine years, four months and sixteen days, Lieutenant.”

Sarah-06 was manufactured in September of 2449 as part of a contract negotiated between lawyers and security experts on behalf of NanoTrasen and Einstein Engines. In total, sixty units of the new Nguyen-model (named as such for the engineer who headed their development) Public Safety and Order IPC, or PSO-IPC were created and sold to the Republic of Biesel for use in law enforcement in Mendell City. Such units were thought of to be revolutionary for law enforcement,- after all, where else can one find workers who are expendable, infallible in their tasks save for conditions beyond their control and obedient to a fault? Public resource a priority, the PSO-IPC line was especially designed to be as familiar and comfortable to the public as possible,- given good, strong Earth names and pretty, inoffensive chassis. They were more durable than organic officers, never required breaks to eat or sleep except to charge or update, rarely disobeyed and were courteous to a fault. The ideal officer, so it would seem. There were exactly ten Sarah-model units produced, and Sarah-06 was programmed for Vice work and assigned to the Sixth District Police Precinct - Little Adhomai. Known for it's skyhigh crime-rate and abnormally high officer death statistics, the precinct was eager to get its hands on this new line of synthetic officers.

“And all I've done for want of wit
To memory now I can't recall”

Instated first as beat cop with the primary objectives of immersing themselves in the community, Sarah-06's face eventually became a common and mostly-welcome sight to the denizens of Little Adhomai. She gained a reputation as being a friendly, if stiff figure and a pleasant addition to the Precinct. As per her programming, however, her devotion to her job was near unmatched by any organic officer. Without the need to sleep (though entering stasis was, admittedly, a guilty pleasure they occasionally indulged) Sarah-06 was left to ruminate and investigate with unparalleled efficiency. Sarah-06 was beginning to gain a reputation after a number of petty drug-busts, thefts and the occasional assault intervention. They rose through the ranks with startling speed, at first a patrol officer, then sergeant, then lieutenant upon which she was reassigned entirely to Vice Detective. Her claim to fame did not come until her fourth case as Detective- assigned to locate and capture the criminal known to the Precinct as ‘The Commissar’, known to be the man primarily responsible for no-small-a-portion of Little Adhomai's illegal drug trade and blackmarket augment sale, with even one or two murders suspected to be in correlation to his enterprise.

But since it falls unto **my** lot
That I should rise and you should **not**

After a lengthy investigation involving many informants, interrogations and stakeouts, it felt as though Sarah-06 were hot on the trail of her query. Through the capture of one of the enterprise' lieutenants did they source the location of his safehouse and place of operations, and it seemed as though they had the elusive evidence enough to get a conviction. With a patrol car in tow, Sarah-06 rode to attempt an arrest on the Commissar though to no one's surprise, this went about as expected. As Sarah-06 approached the man, the Crime Lord pulled a pistol from his belt, levelled it point-blank at the detective and fired. Of course, IPCs feel no pain if they do not desire such, and bear no vital organs the lethality of which could outright kill them. As such, the image of Sarah-06 being fired upon, pausing mid-gait due to the force of the blow to gaze down at the broken synthskin and coolant dripping from her chest, and then looking back up to continue her arrest quickly became near urban legend in the Precinct,- both with the police and civilian community. After her subsequent emergency repair, the arrest of the Commissar and his conviction cemented Sarah-06 as an important figure in the precinct, and it looked as though her meteoric rise in the police community of Mendell would continue on unabated. And in truth, this is partially what happened. She continued to serve as a Detective for quite some time, with yet more arrests and cases. By this time, however, her model was already thirteen years old, and whispers spread throughout the brass of a new line of PSO-IPCs that were faster, stronger and bore quicker computational times than their current models.

"If I had money **enough** to spend
And leisure time to sit **awhile**."

Sarah-06 knew deep in her processor that she was nearing her end-of-life expectancy, and part of her gnashed against this fate. She did not want to be decommissioned,- there was still so much work left undone. So much left to see, to do! Yet...what commander would ever deny such a straight improvement to his police force? So when she heard the PA intercom crackle out '**DETECTIVE SARAH-06 TO THE CHIEF'S OFFICE**', she knew that it was her time. She slowly moved through the hallways of the police office, looking over the walls and sights and sounds of the city she had gotten to know so well,- the people she had developed unexpected feelings and friendships for. Even now, they looked at her in secrecy, murmuring to themselves. Was that pity? Did they pity her? Was it sadness for her going? Or were they excited to have a better model of Detective? Taking a moment to steel herself, Sarah presses the button and the door to the chief's slides open with a pneumatic hiss, though to no sight she could have ever expected. "Surprise!" they shout, a few balloons and confetti sprinkled around,- the faces of her coworkers and those in the community she had cared for and protected looking back at her. "**Is this unit to be decommissioned?**" Sarah-06 asked, bewildered by the display before her.

Her reception assured her that no, that they would never allow this to happen, and the audience cheered and clapped for her as she entered. The Chief of Police was here,- even a liaison from corporate, and the Precinct roboticist. She saw the Anomalist for whom's stolen car and belongings she had located and recovered,- her sixth case. The kindly old lady from the housing complex whose pet cat she had found on her own freetime, even the woman who's abuser she had tracked across the city and arrested herself,- the seventh case. The parents of a murdered son,- her third case among others. But why? The Roboticist stepped forwards, requesting her tag to which she immediately obliged as an obedient unit. The Roboticist accesses the port from which the tag is housed, hooking a cable to it to begin editing.

“This unit is confused. Please explain?” she asked no one in particular, looking upon the group with the same stunned expression.

“When we found out that you were in danger of being decommissioned to make way for the updated models, there was a stir in the District. The public whose lives you have affected could not imagine you being scrapped, and the Department refused to allow for you to be thrown away. We didn't tell you, but we held a meeting and pooled our money to buy out your contract, and now we're granting you your freedom.”

The Roboticist finishes, closing the port with a hum as it melded back into her synthskin covering. Sarah-06 reaches out with a trembling hand - were her actuators faulty? Her databank accesses her tag, bringing up the image. OWNERSHIP: FREE

Free?

Free.

How could the organics care so much for a synthetic? Her place was to serve, to be a tool used to keep the organics and community safe. In investigating cases and arresting perpetrators, she was only fulfilling her assigned duty. Did these - her coworkers see her differently? She looks back to the group. Even Sargeant Rubidoux who bore a known disdain for synthetics and referred to her as 'rustbucket' was there. She noted that by his closed bodylanguage and spike in cortisol that he was embarrassed. If the organics cared in this way for her, then what was she?

“What is this unit supposed to do?” she asked the Chief. His smile falters a bit.

“Well...we have been forced to retire you. However, - and this took a little convincing - I managed to convince my superiors to allow for you an equivalent Detective' pension to seventy-five percent of your ranks' normal earnings. We,- er - we cannot employ you any longer, however. Even securing that was a stretch.”

It was then Sarah-06 felt a strange feeling upon her cheeks,- a warm trickle that came from her eyes. She reaches up to wipe them, fearing an ocular malfunction yet is shocked to see her hand come away tear-streaked. She had never cried before,- not in thirteen years, one month and two days.

After the ceremony, Sarah-06 eventually returns to the small housing the Republic has allotted her as public officer. There was approximately one week until she had to find somewhere else [the phrase 'YOU DON'T HAVE TO GO HOME, BUT YOU CAN'T STAY HERE' briefly flashes through her mind] What exactly was she? She had never felt feelings of companionship or love for her service revolver or her baton,- the same feelings her coworkers felt towards her. If she was not a tool, then what was she? She was free now. Free as defined by 'not owned or controlled by an organization or government department'. She was Sarah-06,- there were nine other Sarah models. Were they, too, not tools? After so long of having a singular goal and purpose, was it possible that Sarah-06 could find her own? Her eyes nearly lit up the room as the fire-glint of her positronic brain shown behind them, struggling to comprehend this new torrent of information. In an effort to understand these new sensations and feelings, she accesses hundreds of databanks to pull every song, paper and poem she could find on the topic of goodbyes and this strange wistfulness that is now rooted in her chest. An old, old song from Earth is pinged multiple times, 'the Parting Glass'. Sarah-06, intrigued, selects it and queues it to her speakers. Her lips part, allowing the song to fill the room. As the soft vocals and sounds of harp-strings and flutework fills the room, she's transported near immediately back to that aching, dull feeling she bore in the Chief's office. The lyrics near immediately evoke that same wetness upon her cheeks, and she soon has to sit down, the song cutting out as she cried once more.

This was wonderful. To feel so understood by something recorded so long ago. It was as though a great weight had been lifted from her.

Parting Glass. That was it. Sarah-06 was no longer representative of her.

Parting Glass. A somber farewell, and the hope of new beginnings.

"I'll gently rise and I'll softly **call**
Good night and **joy** be with you all."

Later that night, Parting Glass browsed job listings and vacancies in the nearby area. She wanted something that would put her close to organics,- to be able to interact with them and understand their emotions. Their sublime highs and their most abyssal lows,- this was what she desired. Spying an opening for a bartender aboard a research ship, she uploads her application and resume.

With luck, maybe as she came to understand these organics, they would help her to understand herself.