



The factory. Where it all begins for me and my clones. That's when I first knew what my purpose was. I waited as I was packaged and transported hundreds of miles to a store to be put on a shelf to be sold. Hopefully. I waited days and nights as many people walked by, not even giving me a glance. I watched as items on other shelves were picked and replaced over and over again. I began to lose hope as weeks turned to months. Then I heard that I was soon to be removed and thrown away. Fear and anxiety filled me up with fearful images of garbage dumps, fire pits, and crusher machines filled my head. I waited in fear for the day to come. On one fateful evening, when the lights were to turn off, I felt a rush of relief as I survived another day. That was until a worker then turned into my aisle and faced me. She then picked me off the shelf and carried me outside. Fear rushed back in as I knew it was time. I was soon placed in the trunk of an old sedan where it felt like hours before I was finally lifted. The air was cold and dark. Spare lights laminated enough for me to see several houses. My carrier then brought me inside to one of these houses. It was dark but warm. I was expecting to be scared to death, but an overwhelming feeling of ease. I was then placed on a counter with a full view of their living room. Lights of red and green filled the ceiling and a small tree occupied the center of the room. Four wooden chairs circled the tree and a cat laid beside the chair closest to me. With the moon illuminating the living room I stared outside to a starless night. Not sure as to what was going to happen, I kept my gaze outside as midnight turned to early morning. Hearing noise upstairs subverted my gaze to the hallway on the right suddenly illuminating. With the sounds of a young child growing, I waited in anticipation for what was going on, when suddenly a young girl appeared in the room. She had cool blue jeans with baby blue hearts and untied white sneakers that were white as ever. Her eyes immediately widened when she laid her eyes. That's when I figured out my purpose. I was hers. A gift. When times were low for me, I was pulled out from damnation and gifted to have a new life. From then we spent hours a day together. She loved talking to her friends. When she wasn't talking, she was playing with them in the living room. She sometimes carried me upstairs to her room where we played dollhouse together. Sometimes she had her friend with her. This was the norm for years. When she got her own car, she still used me to call her friends to hang out. Then came my replacement. I didn't know what it was at the time, but she suddenly spent a lot less time with me. It was a small device that fit in her pocket that seemed to do what I did, but she could carry it in one hand and fit it in her pocket. I suddenly started to spend more time in the back of the kitchen with her mom using me to call about work and paying off the house. The same person who carried me home many years ago with a bright and young face was looking at me with sad and discontent eyes. Over the years of seeing and understanding their emotions I could somewhat tell she was ready to give me up. It was a bright and young day. The sun was shining bright rays of warmth into the living room, but I was in the dark and cold corner of the corner, where I had become accustomed to. I expected the mother to come home in a couple hours, but she was early. Grabbing a plastic trash bag, she walked around the house grabbing items I knew they weren't using. She ended up grabbing multiple trash bags to get everything. That was then she picked me up and started walking outside. Sadness filled me up as I started to think I was leaving for good. I then knew that I never got to say goodbye to my best friend. The one who we had playdates, called with and spent time with for more than a decade. I was then placed in the back of the same sedan I was in when I was introduced to their home. I ended up at a pawn shop on the outskirts of town. No one wanted to be here. I soon learned that instead of this being a wait time for me to find a new home, this was my home. I was placed on the desk and used by the owner. Weeks became months, and months turned into even more years wasted on a desk to stare at all the goods of my time being sold to people who seemed to enjoy them even though I knew they could buy something that was more advanced and could do

more. Owners came and went, but I stayed. What was once my bright and pink vibrant colour slowly faded and rusted. My clear turn dial slowly clouded up and cracked. It seemed like I was going to be there forever. That was until the new owner was a young business man who wanted to revamp the store and everything inside. Finally the day came. A middle aged woman accompanied by two younger gentlemen from a moving truck walked in like they wanted to buy out the whole store. And that's what they wanted. Pulling out a wad of cash and handing it to the owner, she waited for the owner to count the tons of bills in his hands. He then gave her a nod for her to immediately give a nod to the two guys behind her. They immediately went to work emptying out the entire store. There were hundreds of items in the store, but they easily did it in under an hour. I felt jealous. They were picking every item off the shelves but not me. I was also curious. Where are they taking them? What do they want? Are they going to use them or destroy them? One of the guys finally walked out the store with the last item. The store was now empty. Then the unexpected happened. The woman who was waiting outside on her phone while the guys were packing walked inside and took one short glance at me. She then approached the store owner and pulled out a smaller bill and handed it to him. She then walked over to me and picked me up with some difficulty. Years earlier I would've felt big emotions like fear, anxiety, or maybe happiness, or fulfillment. I felt empty. I tried to hope for something good, but as I was placed in the back of the moving truck I stopped trying. I stared at one the moving guys closed the back door and the dark wall with bleakness. Back in the day I would've felt every second being moved in a car, but these hours came by in an instant. We stopped at a seemingly newly built mansion. It looked empty. I could then figure out that we were the decoration for this place. Whilst being transported out the car and in the house, I got a read of the sign out front. It was a retirement home. Maybe I would be placed out in an open room where old people could use me to call their kids and grandkids. After days of waiting in a dark room with other fellow antiques, the time came. Lights were filled and old people started filling in the house and rooms. This place stayed quiet even though there were at least ten people in this room at all times throughout the day. A double of dull weeks flew by when One person caught my attention. I didn't know why because I never knew anyone with white hair and a cane. She took a look at me and went to sit by me. She struggled to pick me up and brought me close to her to read my serial number. She then stood up to leave the room. It then caught my eye. It wasn't her white hair or wooden cane, but yellow dirt sneakers and blue jeans with a faded and unrecognizable design. Was it who I think it was? That evening when the majority of people were starting to leave, a worker in blue picked me up and moved me to another room. This was a small room with a bed, balcony, record player, and a table for which I was placed. Looking at the only other item on this small table was a picture frame with a photo. A photo of someone in blue jeans with a heart design and white sneakers. To the right was a younger cell phone with a bright pink colour and clear turn dial. Me. It was her! After all these decades, living different lives, we found each other. Well, I guess she found me first. The same one who went on countless play dates with and who I became inseparable with had come back in my life. Hearing an audible click and the opening of a door, I saw her. Time had really been ticking on her, but I hadn't really aged as good either. I felt complete. I was ready to spend the rest of time by her side as she used me to call all the people she knew. Carrying a bag of food, she slowly walked in and filled her fridge, slowly filling her fridge item after item. With her cane, she walked to a chair right next to me and slowly sat down. placing her cane next to her chair she placed her hand on top of me and smiled. I smiled. The sun slowly dipped under the sky turned from blue to bright and vibrant oranges and purples. This was it. Our retirement.