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Notices: This story contains violence and sexual content.

Notes: This story picks up in Season 2 from the television show and also takes a few liberties.

Summary: The sequel to No Programming. Sarah and Cameron tie up loose ends by tracking down Sam and attempt to stop him. But the time machine is built, Sam sets the date for 2028, and takes Sarah and Cameron with him. They make it through the time sphere, but Cameron and Sarah find themselves in the middle of the war between Skynet and the Resistance. Now Sarah must trust Cameron to take her to safety and back to 2008.

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What Are Terminators Made Of?

by Red Hope

Chapter 5

Sarah strolled out of the bathroom upon hearing the knock at her door. She had the toothbrush in her mouth so she barely managed, "Come in!" She continued brushing her teeth and watched who entered her quarters. She furrowed her eyebrows at the familiar face at the door, and her brush went still.

"Hello, Miss Connor."

Sarah blinked once then pushed her shock away. "One sec," she muttered between her full mouth. She hurried back into the bathroom and quickly finished with her teeth. Within a minute, she came back out and approached her visitor. She shook her head once and when she spoke, her tone held notes of awe. "It's been a long time, Lauren."

Lauren Fields slipped her left hand into her white coat's front pocket. "Yes... a very long time, Miss Connor." She eased a smile onto her full lips.

Sarah was still surprised by Lauren Field's arrival in her room. She realized that Lauren wore a doctor's attire so she asked, "You're a doctor in the Hospital Department?" She noted a medical tote in Lauren's right hand.

Lauren regarded her own attire then smiled at the time traveler. "Yes, I've been a doctor for the Resistance for a couple of years now."

Sarah couldn't hide her smile as she studied Lauren's aged features. She noticed Lauren still had the short hair style, but Sarah picked out strands of gray too. "How's your sister... Sydney, right?"

"She's doing really well," Lauren replied. She then nodded off her right shoulder. "Cameron is with you."

"Yes." Sarah crossed her arms over her chest and mentioned, "Her and I sorta stumbled through time, by accident."

"That's what I hear." Laure then tilted her head to the side. "I also hear you've had a fever on your little walk here to the city." She had gentle features and an amused smile.

Sarah arched an eyebrow and remarked, "The little birdie's name wouldn't happen to be Cameron?"

Lauren chuckled and held out her hand to the desk's chair in hidden signal. "She cares for you, Miss Connor." She followed the time traveler to the desk, and she set her tote down. She unzipped it then retrieved a thermometer. "Hopefully I can repay you a bit by relieving your fever."

Sarah peered up at the doctor and gave a faint smile. "There's nothing to repay, Lauren."

Lauren held out the thermometer near Sarah's now open mouth. "I have a lot to thank you and Cameron for." She inserted it under her patient's tongue. "How's your diet been lately?" She couldn't quite take in Sarah's figure because the Resistance's attire was baggy.

"Cameron keeps me fed," Sarah joked.

Lauren smirked some but became more serious. "Since your gun wound," she commented. She saw Sarah's faint glower so she informed, "Cameron didn't tell me that... the nurse from last night told me."

Sarah let out a small sigh then nodded. "It's healing but caused the fever."

"I'll get an antibiotic prescribed to you," the doctor decided. She now retrieved the thermometer when it beeped that it was done. She read the temperature then asked, "What was it last night?" She slid the used thermometer into its clear, plastic case.

"Cameron said it was one hundred two... something." Sarah couldn't recall the exact temperature, but it was good enough.

"That's good... you're coming down." Lauren then scanned the room and commented, "It looks like you'll need more fluids to drink." She focused back on her patient. "How's your appetite been?"

"Crap," Sarah replied.

"Hmmm. You need to make yourself eat." Lauren reached into her tote and retrieved a small container of pills. "Something to take off the headache's edge. You need to get more rest as well."

Sarah shook her head and argued, "There's not much time for it." She was about to get up, but the hand on her shoulder kept her still.

"You're not going anywhere anytime soon," Lauren swore. "I can promise you that with how things work around here."

Sarah suspiciously eyed the doctor. "What does that mean?"

Lauren broke the contact and merely explained, "Nobody travels through time without your son's permission... and he's more than likely going to take his time blessing your departure." She grinned at Sarah's taken aback expression. "He hasn't seen you in a long time, can you blame him?" She left it at that and collected her tote. "I'll have a nurse deliver your antibiotic later."

Sarah climbed to her feet and followed the doctor to the door. "Thank you, Lauren." She held the door open for the doctor.

"I believe your test results should be finishing up in the next few hours," the doctor mentioned. "Once we submit the results to the powers that be, you'll be free to move around... mostly."

"I've noticed a few are cautious with what's said to us." Sarah leaned against the doorframe. She glanced at the guard, who pretended not to overhear it all.

Lauren Fields looked at the statue by Sarah's door then turned back to Sarah. "It's that damn Temporal Directive, but it means well." She then promised, "I'll be sure to stop by later to check on your condition." She offered one last smile. "Get some rest, Miss Connor." She slipped her freehand into her coat pocket and casually strolled down the long hallway.

Sarah briefly watched her go then glanced at her door guard, who didn't speak or look at her. She nearly rolled her eyes but went back into her room. She went to the bathroom and decided to take a pill in hopes it'd sooth her faint headache. She picked up a glass from the sink that was provided for her. She filled it then washed down an aspirin.

Eventually, Sarah made her way back to the bed and curled up under the covers. She hadn't realized how worn out she was until her body sunk back in the mattress. She glanced at the time and saw it was eleven o'clock in the morning. She grabbed the remote, turned on the television, and selected the television show genre. She realized it was a massive alphabetical list, and she haphazardly flipped through the list. She finally settled on some show called Will & Grace.

Sarah started out with the first episode from the first season. She quickly realized the premises behind the show, but she couldn't contain her chuckles at some of the antics. She especially got a few laughs from the character Jack. But into the second episode, Sarah dozed off and never heard the knock at her door an hour later.

It wasn't until one in the afternoon that the large terminator slipped into the bedroom. She quietly closed the door and looked from Sarah to the television. She briefly discerned what show, which didn't take her long, and it surprised her that Sarah had selected it. Cameron shifted her illuminated eyes to the sleeping human and went over to her.

Sarah quickly pulled out from her dreams once she sensed a presence by her bed. She immediately opened her eyes and involuntarily reacted to seeing a terminator above her. She'd sat up while her hand went under the pillow. But everything was wrong because there was no gun and the terminator didn't attack her.

"Sarah," Cameron soothed in a cautious tone.

Sarah dropped her shoulders and visibly relaxed. "You shouldn't sneak up on me like that." She played with her tussled hair as her situation came back to memory. "What's going on?"

The terminator displayed a pill container. "A nurse tried to drop off your antibiotic but saw you were asleep. She left them with me." She placed them on the nightstand. "Your blood results also are complete."

The human developed a ghostly smile and joked, "So am I still the mother of all destiny?"

"Apparently," Cameron coolly replied.

Sarah nodded then shoved the blankets aside. She still wore her blue suit, but earlier this morning somebody had taken her other attire so it could be cleaned for her. "What about you?"

"I believe I'm next," the terminator informed. "Thomas is waiting in the hall to take us."

The human slid out of bed and stood up but stretched a little. She realized her headache was finally gone, and she felt a lot better today.

Cameron pressed her fingertips into the human's neck. She now lost a faint worry line on her brow that seemed to be there since Sarah first became sick. "Your fever is almost gone." She saw Sarah was about to say something but a knock at the door stole Cameron's attention. She decided to handle it and opened the door once she was near the knob.

"She may want these... they just arrived." Thomas stood there but held out Sarah's freshly washed clothes. "They'll bring a few new items later too now that they have her size."

"Thank you." The terminator retrieved the folded clothes and promised, "We'll be out in a few minutes."

"No rush." Thomas backed away once the terminator closed the door.

Sarah was pleased to see her cleaned clothes had returned to her. She took them from Cameron and headed to the bathroom to get changed, but she talked to the terminator too. "Did you happen to see Lauren?"

Cameron was watching the Will & Grace episode from where she stood in the middle of the room. Yet she also listened to Sarah. "Yes, she stopped by before she saw to you."

"It would seem somebody tipped her off about my fever." Sarah already had her dark jeans on and fitted her bra on properly.

"Yes, I told her what happened."

Sarah pulled her tank top over her muscular body then wandered to the bathroom's door. She clasped the frame and studied the terminator. She knew that Cameron had taken her seriously despite she was teasing Cameron. But from Cameron's serious expression, she commented, "You were worried, huh?"

Cameron lowered her head some but then nodded. "I can fight many enemies for you. I can't defeat death though."

Sarah patted her palm against the frame then slipped back into the bathroom. "You will find," she called from the bathroom, "that in a human's life it is the one thing we must do." She retrieved her clean socks and went to the desk. She pulled out the chair that held her leather jacket. She sat down and started to get her boots on too.

"What must you do?" Cameron oddly studied the human, who was bent forward.

Sarah's face was masked by her fallen hair. But she twisted her head around, which revealed her sombre attitude. "We must die." She focused back on her task to lace up her boots.

The terminator carefully processed Sarah's defining words then came up with an appropriate response. "I prefer to hold back your death."

Sarah stood up and collected her leather jacket. She neared Cameron and bitterly commented, "I never thought I'd hear a terminator say that... especially about me." She drifted past Cameron and shrugged on her jacket.

"It will not matter what I say... or do," Cameron brought up in a cold tone. She saw that Sarah Connor faced her again. "You define me by my metal."

Sarah sensed a pending argument about to erupt between them. She planned to face it head on so she came back over to the terminator. She reached up and tapped Cameron on the forehead. "I define you by what's programmed up there." She narrowed her eyes at the terminator.

"You do not," Cameron debated, "because if you did then you wouldn't mistreat me."

Sarah suddenly walked away but turned back and fought, "I don't mistreat you." But her tone held self doubt.

"You admitted it to me the other night."

Sarah was caught off guard and looked away from the terminator. She vaguely recalled that night in the subway, but she thought it'd been a dream.

Cameron neared the human but stopped a few feet from her. "You think you're the only one that makes sacrifices." She found stormy green eyes lifted to her. "Everyday I fight and protect you and John from... my kind without question. I fight to destroy my existence in the future."

Sarah was still turned away, and she shut her eyes.

"You say I don't give myself enough credit, but you give me none." Cameron hoped her words would impel Sarah Connor's hardened skin. "How can you teach me about humanity when you're more machine than I?" She came up to the human and softly informed, "I define you by your heart, which you've clearly lost over time." She went to the door but couldn't help finishing her speech by jabbing, "And it took a terminator to see that truth, Sarah Connor." She stepped outside and joined Thomas.

Sarah Connor dropped her head backwards and there were emotions that fought to rise from her. Yet, Sarah willfully pushed them all done because right now wasn't the time. She steeled herself and followed Cameron's cold trail out of the quarters. She forced a smile onto her face at seeing Thomas, but she made no eye contact with Cameron.

Thomas explained that Cameron had to be tested for her identity, but it had to be carried out in a special facility. He led them through the maze like fortress and took them down to the sixth floor. On the way, Thomas chatted about Sarah's confirmation on her blood work and that once Cameron checks out that a tour would be done. Finally, they came upon a set of double doors that were swung inward.

Sarah took in the lab that was a mix of computers and technical equipment that didn't look familiar to her. She considered whether or not Cameron knew what was the technology.

Thomas stopped at a closed, black door and said, "The test will be performed in this room. I'm sorry I can't join you, but I'll be out in the hall to wait for you." He grabbed the doorknob and pulled the door

open but stepped aside. He held it for them.

The terminator didn't hesitate to go first so she could confirm it was safe. She entered the well lit room, which had a few soldiers posted. She scanned over their faces but didn't know them in her database.

Sarah followed in behind the terminator. She moved past the tall terminator and curiously studied the man that was seated at a large control panel in the center of the room. She lost her nervous features because a warm smile took over when the man spun around in his seat to face the newcomers.

"John," Sarah greeted and approached her son.

John Connor popped up from his chair and met his mother halfway with a wide stride. He instantly enveloped his mother into a long, powerful hug. He buried his face into her neck and inhaled her familiar scent that he hadn't experienced in many long years. He held her close and feared to say anything because it felt like a dream.

Sarah had one arm around her son's waist and the other at the back of his head. She slightly swayed their neatly pressed bodies. She kissed him on the cheek then withdrew a little, but she still held John like he held her. She tenderly pressed her palm into his warm cheek.

John mirrored back his mother's smile. He had glossy, green eyes and stared for a long time at his mother. The last time he saw her, it'd been the hardest moment in his life. "It's good to see you." He searched his mother's vivid eyes, and he remembered them being lifeless.

Sarah shook her head and took in her son's grown, matured features. She felt her smile shift more bittersweetly. "It's good to see you too." She finally pulled away from the physical contact but gingerly grabbed him by the side. "You look much more... grown than when I saw you a few days ago."

John couldn't help a laugh at the joke. "I can imagine." He still had his smile, but he slowly looked up from his mother and focused on the full, intimidating six feet of terminator. But he was not concerned at all and just held his smile.

Sarah released her son and let him go to Cameron. But she curiously watched how he greeted her.

"Welcome back, Cameron," John warmly started. "I'm glad to see you too."

Cameron inclined her head in respect then offered a smile. "It's nice to be back, for awhile."

"Liar," John bantered, "I think you have a soft spot for the twenty-first century." He caught how Cameron didn't bother to argue him. He then entered her personal space and pulled her in for a hug.

The terminator hadn't expected the physical gesture, but she easily hugged him back. She recalled only doing this one other time in her existence, just before she was sent back to 1999 on her mission.

John ended the hug and regarded the terminator from head to toe. "Now I know for myself." He folded his thick arms and shook his head. "You weren't kidding about the size manipulation." He tilted his head similar to how Cameron often did it. "Is this your normal size?"

"Yes."

John bobbed his head a few times but turned and mentioned, "Let's do the identification... it'll only take

a few minutes."

The terminator followed the Resistance leader to the supercomputer's terminal. "You must check it?"

John flashed a grin at Cameron. "I'm the only one that knows where to look for it... or what to look for."

Sarah joined the pair by the terminal and stood next to her son, who returned to his earlier seat.

"Cameron, can you sit in that chair on the other side?" John indicated it and waited for the terminator to get around the terminal. "You remember the hook ups, right?"

"Of course."

Sarah crossed her arms and looked at her son. "I'm surprised you felt safe enough to do this yourself if Cameron wasn't really her."

John tilted his head back and met his mother's features. "My mother wouldn't travel and depend on any other terminator." He caught how his mother was shocked by his truthful statement, but he went back to Cameron. "Are you ready?"

Sarah turned back to the terminator, who had linked up her tubules to the supercomputer's terminal through a port. She curiously looked down at the screen in the terminal.

"Yes," the terminator replied.

"Great." John quickly worked on the terminal's keyboard but mentioned, "Let me know if it's too much grinding on your system, Cameron."

The terminator was stiff in the chair, her eyes lifeless now, and it almost seemed like data flickered past her blue orbs.

John glanced up at the terminator when he received no response. He knew he should have mentioned it earlier before Cameron hooked up to the supercomputer. He let it go and focused back on the screen. "When I scrubbed terminators, I would put signatures or some kind of way to identify that they're with the Resistance now." His fingers danced over the keyboard, and he stared at the screen. "It's come in handy a few times."

Sarah looked at the screen, but it made no sense to her. She shifted her focus to her son's profile. "But Cameron wasn't scrubbed." She'd taken a wild guess at this, but she knew she was right when John hesitated then a grin creased his lips.

"No," John softly confessed, "she didn't need to be." He didn't type anything else and watched the screen, but he kept his voice down. "Cameron and I tell everybody she's been scrubbed." He briefly glanced up at his mom then back to the screen. "If you don't tell people she's been scrubbed then they'll start to freak out."

"Why wasn't she?" Sarah then corrected herself. "Why didn't she need to be?"

John started punching at the keyboard again. He had to dig deeper for the identification because it seemed to be heavily buried in Cameron's memory files. "Because she's unique... very unique." His tone was distant, and he frowned at something. "It looks like she has some damage to her memory

files."

Sarah studied the screen, but she couldn't make heads or tails of anything. "We had a run in with a Skynet agent... he put a spider in her cortex."

John shook his head then typed a few more code commands. "Bastard," he muttered. He then returned to their earlier conversation. "Mom, you have to understand that Cameron can control her programming... if I had scrubbed her, it would have hurt her." He hit the enter key and waited for something to populate on the screen. "She'd just been another zombie terminator." He then brightened at something familiar on the screen. "Bingo."

Sarah watched her son skim over the screen's output.

"You see this?" John pointed at the screen. "Bunch of nonsense right?" He grinned because his mother chuckled at his question. "But..." He hit the down arrow and pointed at a large number. "This number is the total minutes since Cameron joined the Resistance." He tapped the screen once. "All this seeming garbage above it is an algorithm that's basically tracking time since she joined." He now shrugged. "It's simple, basic and not something Cameron would really pay attention to in her programming."

Sarah straightened up from her hunched position. "So you think she can control her programming?" She folded her arms and patiently waited for his response.

John slowly nodded, but he hastily worked his way back out of Cameron's software. "All terminators are capable of controlling their programming, but some do not realize it or make an attempt." He now pulled away from the keyboard and the screen went black. "For some terminators, Skynet is all they know and anything else is too much." He now focused on Cameron, who had withdrawn her tubules.

Cameron turned her head to John and remarked, "I was not aware that you uploaded that algorithm."

The Resistance leader softly grinned at the terminator. "Surprise." He rested his right arm on the terminal and became serious. "Mom mentioned you had a spider in your cortex."

Cameron briefly looked at Sarah but responded, "Yes. We were able to remove it before it reset me." She saw John's features go from surprise then to pride. "It did damage some deeper memory files."

"I noticed." John leaned back in the chair and rested his hands in his lap. "Can you repair them?"

"Of course."

But John slowly raised an eyebrow. "Do you need help?"

Cameron seemed to consider it but finally replied, "They're almost repaired, but thank you."

"Let me know if you change your mind."

Sarah now cut back into the conversation. "Why did Skynet send agents back for Cameron?" She'd been wanting this answer for some time, and she wondered if she'd really get it, even from her son.

John peered up at his mother. "Skynet has a bounty on Cameron's head."

Sarah realized this may be like pulling teeth. "Why's there a bounty?" She then saw John was about to say three words that she did not like to hear. "And don't tell us that it is complicated."

John quirked a small grin and chuckled. "It's the Temporal Directive, Mom... I have to be careful what I tell you."

"Charming," Sarah muttered in annoyance then looked over at Cameron.

John straightened up and decided on a new topic. "Listen, I thought we could all get together for dinner."

"John, I can't-"

"Cameron," John cut off, "just come." He gave the terminator a hard stare that left no room for arguments. He saw Cameron's faint nod so he turned back to his mother. "I want you to meet Kate."

Sarah furrowed her eyebrows until John explained it was his wife. She now smiled at this news.

"We thought it'd be nice," John softly explained. He looked between Sarah and Cameron. "I'll come by your rooms around six...?"

"That sounds good," Sarah agreed. She hadn't expected that Cameron would be invited since it initially seemed like a family event. But the more she thought about it, she started to wonder if this future version of her son didn't see Cameron as family.

"Great." John stood up and explained, "I have to get to a few meetings, but I believe Thomas will be showing you around the city and fortress." He had another thought and promised, "You'll get a map of everything." He turned to Cameron. "I can upload one to your system later if you'd like."

"Yes," Cameron agreed.

"What about getting back home?" Sarah inquired. She noticed an instant shift from her son that she'd never seen from him.

John regarded his mother more seriously. "It's not a light decision to just send people through time. Obviously though that's where you both belong now." He hesitated for a beat and slipped his hands into his military style pants. "Before you can go, Cameron needs her skin sheath."

"Can that be done here?"

John confirmed it with a nod. "But I want to do a small hardware update too." He spoke to Cameron now. "I thought you could do with a NIC. You'll be able to use GPS, Wi-fi, cellular networks... Bluetooth." He then grinned at the terminator. "You may have to do some hacking to get into the systems, but I think you can manage."

Cameron nodded at the idea. "It would be very useful."

"Great." John was pleased but focused on his mother. "After Cameron receives her skin sheath, she needs to wait a day or two before she can time travel. We have to make sure her skin and organs don't reject her endoskeleton." He noticed his mother's confused features but probably because she didn't know that about skin sheaths. "Another sticky matter is if Cameron's endoskeleton isn't clean enough, and we mold the skin on then her skin could get sick."

Sarah glanced once at the terminator then commented, "We did a lot of traveling to get here."

John fully agreed and was worried about that factor. "There's procedures and methods to make sure the endoskeleton is properly sanitized." He was about to say more but his watch beeped at him. He frowned a bit but looked up from his watch's screen.

Sarah took that as a sign that her son probably had to go. She took a step away and said, "We'll see you tonight."

The leader offered a smile and a nod, but he promised, "I'll get the security detail removed too."

Cameron was now at Sarah's side and waited to go.

Sarah mirrored the smile. "See you then." She and Cameron quietly left the computer room and met Thomas outside the lab.

John Connor dismissed the soldiers that'd been with them for safety reasons. He waited until they were gone then he sat back down. He loosely folded his arms over his stomach and bowed his head. He thoughtfully stared at his worn boots. After a few minutes, a side door opened, and John listened to the soft footfall that approached him.

Once the person stood next to the terminal, John raised up his head and took in the stern features of a middle aged woman. He studied her soft yet cool blue eyes and her midnight hair that was short and cropped. He offered a smile to her and shifted in his chair. He pushed back with his heels and forced the wheeled chair to roll back a few inches. Now he had a better view of her face because she was over six feet and had a muscular built.

"What are your thoughts?" John quietly asked.

The woman wore a plain, black top and folded her thick arms. She leaned her hip against the terminal and when she spoke, her voice was familiar. "I think we're safe, so far."

"Mom is going to keep asking questions... you know how she can be." John's features grew concerned, and he shook his head.

"You have to use the Temporal Directive to shield yourself from her."

John softly sighed and crossed his ankles, he dipped his head again. "Do you think she'll figure it out?" He looked up knowingly at the woman.

"No... she'll get close, but she won't know everything."

"You'd know better than I would," John agreed. "Now, I just have to have this talk with mom." He worriedly studied the tall woman. "You don't have any idea what I tell her?"

"No, I don't know... but it was enough," the woman promised.

John softly sighed and muttered, "Whatever I told... tell her... it has to make a difference."

"It will," the woman insisted, "because she'll listen to you."

John peered up with hooded eyes and remarked, "She never use to."

"That's because you were younger." The woman slightly tilted her head and curiously regarded the

Resistance leader. "She'll listen now."

The leader rested his hand on the terminal. "I hope you're right." He then slightly grinned at her. "You usually are right."

The woman grinned back but it fell quickly. "Not always."

"You're right about her," John whispered.

The woman grew solemn and her eyes fell to the terminal that she leaned against.

John carefully studied her profile and gently asked, "Are you going to go to her?" He watched her close her eyes, and he carefully reminded, "If you do... then don't forget the Temporal Directive."

The woman opened her eyes and hoarsely reminded, "How can I forget it?" She turned back to John. "We wrote it together." She lowered her arms and tapped her fingertips into the terminal once. "I'm more concerned about her scans than the Temporal Directive."

"It's best if you avoid her... she'll figure it out then," John considered. "We don't want to screw this up either."

"Mmmm," the woman softly agreed. She moved away from the terminal and started back to the main door. "I'll see you at the meeting later."

John spun around in his seat and watched the lanky woman head to the exit. But he quickly called, "You should go to her."

The woman pressed her hand into the door yet stalled and looked back at John. "It's too hard." She had her head turned sidelong, and she could make out John. She pushed the door open but hesitated at John's voice.

"You'll regret it if you don't see her." John tightly clutched his knee then softly added, "Even if it's for a minute, Blue."

"I'll think about it," the woman softly promised then she was gone.

John Connor was left alone in the computer room, and he sadly sighed at his friend's lack of enthusiasm about the time travelers' arrival. They both knew this day would come, and he'd been looking forward to it – to seeing his mother again. He didn't like the idea of sending his mother or Cameron back to 2008, but he had no choice. However, John knew he couldn't press on his friend to visit them, well at least his mother. He just decided that time would tell.

To be continued.