

D4N13L DR055: Blood is Thicker Than Salt Water

Originally created as a caretaker robot by the Dross family, D4N13L DR055 is the sole survivor and protector of the Dross children after a devastating virus ravages the world.

Standing at around 4 '11", he was effectively able to communicate and be on the same level as the young children that he would take care of while Edison Dross, the head of the household, worked long hours to make the very robots that D4N13L would call his brothers and sisters. He would work with other robots in the house as well, including 3R1K4, a caretaker robot like himself that focused more on Edison's wife: Virginia Dross.

Virginia and Edison, or Eddie as he was called by those close to him, were the co-founders of Potentia Mechanics. This is the company that would ultimately mass produce hundreds and thousands of D4N13Ls and 3R1K4s, but Edison would make a point of keeping the very first ones that he created of both models.

Both of them are caretaker models, however there would later be other models created for specific jobs to help further automate hard labor (i.e. construction, trash collection, etc.). Anything that you can think of that doesn't necessarily require a human would be replaced with a robot companion. This would end up causing one of the largest recessions in history, although nothing would be able to touch the Dross family due to their now astronomical wealth. Subsequently, they also gained a lot of sway within the political scene, but D4N13L and 3R1K4 weren't really involved with it much beyond watching the children during the household head's long meetings with the president.

Months before the disaster, D4N13L and 3R1K4 were asked to attend a meeting by Edison Dross for their new directives: Protect Percy and Ada, the Dross children and heirs, at all cost. This was unsurprising to them, and of course they were interested to fulfill this directive as they were with everything else. Part of them was curious, especially for D4N13L as he stayed behind that day. 3R1K4 was less interested at that point, she was more worried about the amount of drinks that were being consumed by Lady Virginia, or by the frightening newscasts that she would watch late at night with Edison over the brandy he claimed would only be had for a special occasion.

D4N13L and Edison had a father-and-son like relationship, even before he had his youngest child Percy. This relationship was the same up until the end, even when the plans for “Dēcidēs”. Even in translation, realizing that it was latin for “you will decay” or even more directly, “you will die”, was a frightening realization for D4N13L. Even more so realizing what it would do to the humans that he so loved. He wasn’t sure if the fear that he felt would be more about the potential deaths of Percy and Ada, or the change that would happen to his day to day life. D4N13L and 3R1K4 sat down that night once again, months after they had been given their directive, only to be told that it was time to start gearing up to leave: something was happening.

D4N13L took care of the travel plans, realizing that his legs had never been used for this long of a distance while 3R1K4 made sure that the kids were packed and not asking any questions wondering where their parents were or why they had been crying when they said goodbye. Edison and Virginia had explained to them that night as well that they would be staying under the assumption they would be trying to develop an antidote. Virginia looked hopeful, if only the same could be said for Edison.

D4N13L had never even left the city at this point. Edison had given him the coordinates for a dock that would hold the submarine used to check on the robotic fish that were used to collect algae for the artificial food that the new earth now required to sustain itself. This was another piece of revolutionary technology developed by Potentia Robotics, however at that point those fish (or the byproduct of the “Piscis” project) were operating as they should and were not hostile towards fellow constructs. Over time, however, the robotic fish that were normally docile grew more and more aggressive as time went on, periodically releasing bursts of electricity and physically attacking those that would move past it.

The journey was uneventful, however it made the trip almost more unnerving. It wasn’t until they made it to the private dock that they realized just how many cars were trying to escape out of the city. D4N13L at this point wasn’t concerned with those around him, just the children. Autopilot was a better word for it as he started to frantically corral the now upset children into the submarine, hoping that any other problem that they would face could be handled within the

submarine waiting for them. And, if not in the submarine, handled in the laboratory they were told to find and stay until they were retrieved.

The ground started to rumble, something streaking through the sky deceptively slow, but D4N13L could recognize that it was moving at a rate of hundreds of miles per hour before it released mid air. Relief spread over those around him, but as those around him started to cough, he knew that it was time to leave. However, as he was making his way to close the hatch, the sudden jet stream caused debris to fly and go through his eye socket. He didn't remember leaving at that point but recalls coming to again when the submarine was now far underwater and the children were asleep. He had to be retold where they were, and was unable to recall the location of the laboratory Edison had trusted him with. 3R1K4 didn't need to know that though.

Piloting the submarine was not D4N13L's task, but in fact that of 3R1K4's who had been given this directive on top of protecting the kids. Most of the time they were given different subtasks with an overarching main one.

D4N13L spent a lot of the first few months entertaining the children, keeping up to date on the news that was coming through a small radio in the corner that had long since stopped working correctly. He also spent a lot of time within an area of the submarine looking at old documents and research about Dēcidēs, which only made the news they were hearing even worse.

The change in lifestyle for both of them was strange as well. At this point, instead of worrying about getting Percy to school on time or playing dress up with Ada, D4N13L and 3R1K4 were worried about finding food or anything that wasn't just processed algae. It got too much for 3R1K4 after a certain point D4N13L would note, eventually causing her personality that they had figured was preprogrammed to change drastically into a cold, calculated robot. Not the mother figure that she had been originally intended to be.

The oxygen was an overlooked issue. It would be fine if the air wasn't compromised on the outside, however they only had so much to last them until they needed to figure out an alternative. 3R1K4 had been working on her esophageal system more, along with her neck being able to extend

and create an air-tight seal through a porthole. The oxygen, unnecessary for the robots themselves, was mainly filtered and used for the cryogenic chambers in which the children- now teenagers- are being kept alive.

Edison realized early on during the production of the virus that if this were to get out, there would be an insanely long time before the air outside would be not only breathable, but not infected with whatever the virus would eventually mutate into.

They were able to regress the children's aging as much as possible, however they weren't able to stop it completely. Children knowing that they are going into cryogenic sleep is one thing, but children knowing that they won't be the same when they come out of it or might have gone through puberty without even knowing what it is is another.

That was 100 years ago, D4N13L has been alone with his automated thoughts, or his real thoughts, forever. Not even knowing whether or not that the conversations he was having with 3R1K4 were pre planned by the Dross family or if they were ones that he wanted to have himself.

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