

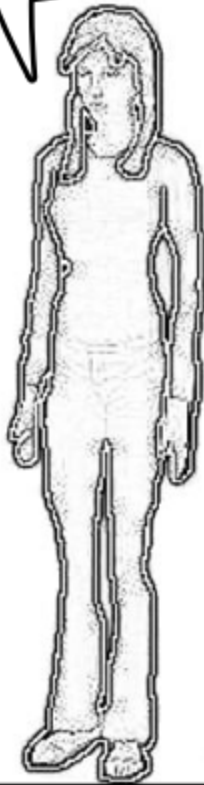
# Fire of Life



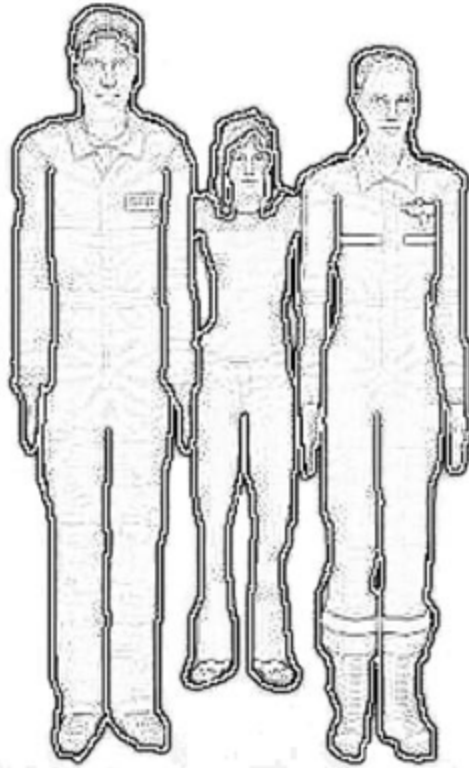
WRITTEN BY:  
EMILY  
VANSCHALKWYK



HEY. MY NAME'S  
ROKO O'KEEFE.

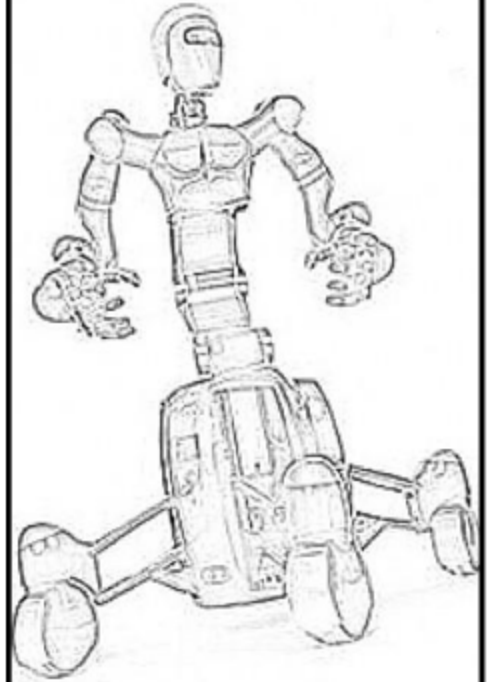


FOR YEARS, I NEVER HAD  
A STORY TO TELL.

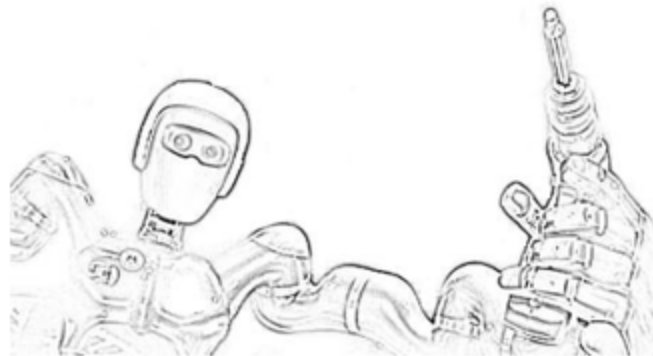
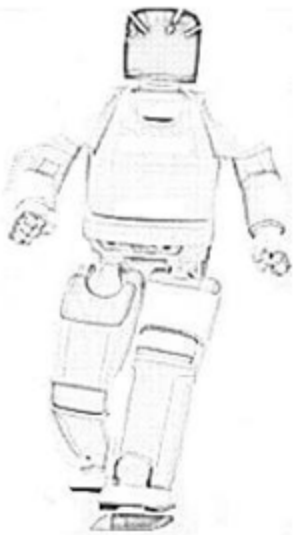


IT WAS JUST ME AND MY  
PARENTS.

AND ONE OF THE--  
ALEC, MY FAMILY'S  
A.I. SERVANT.

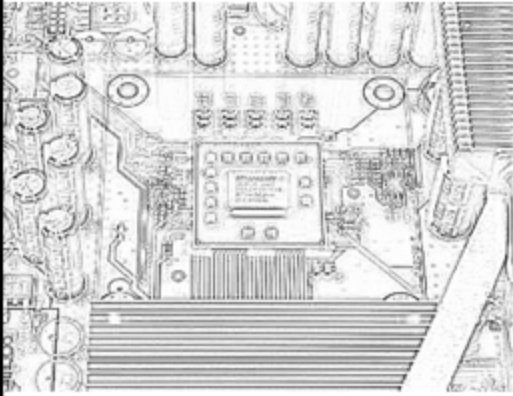


I'M BIG ON THE RIGHTS OF A.I. (SO IS ALEC). I HAVE BEEN FOR A WHILE, BUT  
RECENT EVENTS HAVE MADE IT EVEN MORE SO.  
THE DEBATE ABOUT WHETHER A.I. SHOULD HAVE RIGHTS HAS TO DO WITH  
WHETHER OR NOT A.I. ARE CONSIDERED TO BE 'ALIVE'.



BUT THESE GUYS HAVE ALWAYS BEEN ALIVE TO ME.

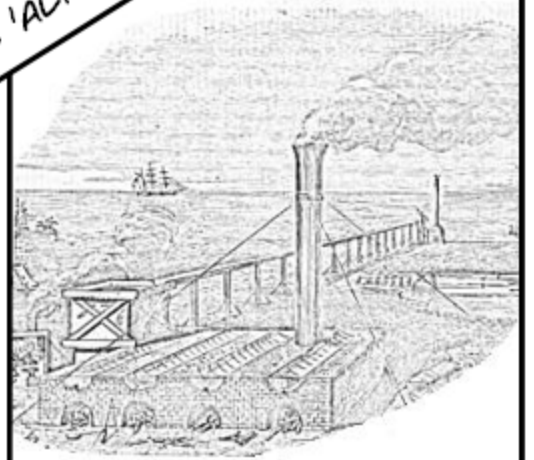
SOME PEOPLE SAY WE CAN'T BE EQUAL, BUT I DISAGREE.



≠



IN THIS SOCIETY,  
SOME THINGS  
AUTOMATICALLY  
HAVE RIGHTS, LIKE  
PEOPLE OR  
ANIMALS--THINGS  
THAT ARE 'ALIVE'.



BUT SOME PEOPLE  
CLAIM A.I. ARE JUST  
MACHINES, BUILT IN  
FACTORIES, AND AREN'T  
ALIVE.

1. AN A.I. CANNOT KNOWINGLY BRING HARM TO A HUMAN BEING OR ANY LIVING CREATURE, AND MUST, IF POSSIBLE, PREVENT SUCH HARM FROM OCCURRING.



Obedience

2. AN A.I. MUST OBEY A HUMAN BEING, UNLESS IT CONFLICTS WITH A HIGHER-ORDER LAW.

AN A.I.'S ACTIONS ARE GOVERNED BY FOUR BASIC LAWS.

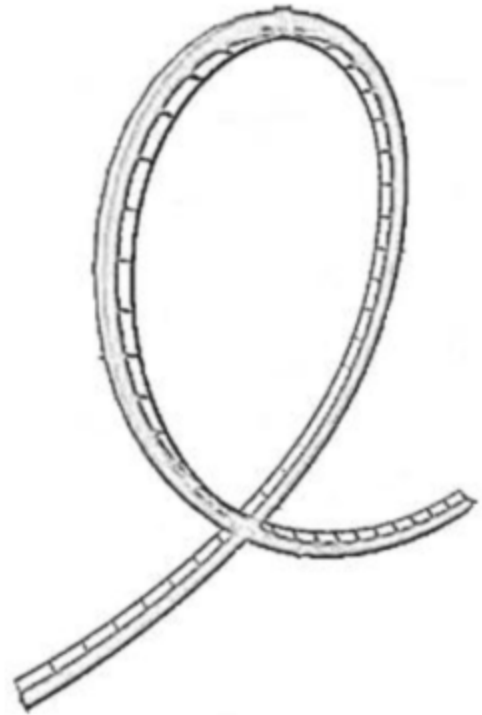
3. AN A.I. MUST PRESERVE ITSELF, AS LONG AS SUCH AN ACTION DOES NOT CONFLICT WITH A HIGHER-ORDER LAW.



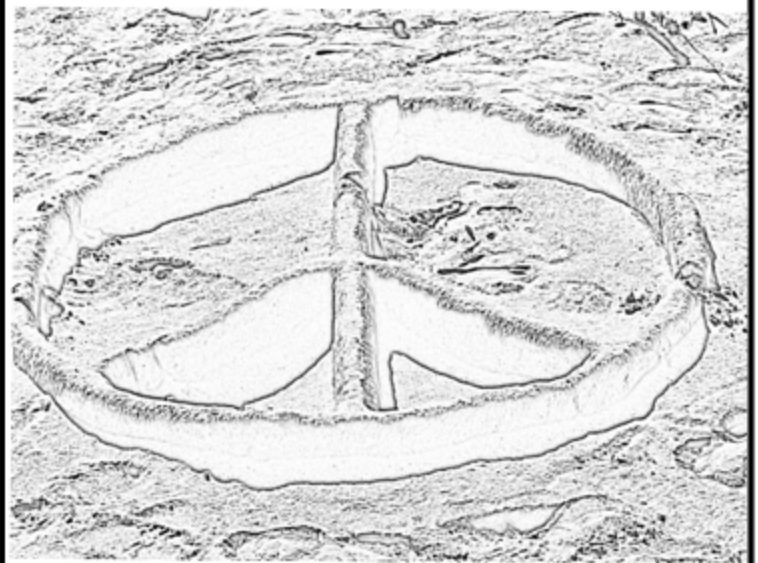
4. AN A.I. MAY DEMONSTRATE FREE WILL, AS LONG AS THIS DOES NOT CONFLICT WITH A HIGHER-ORDER LAW.

THE REASON I SAY THAT IS BECAUSE THERE IS ACTUALLY A LOT MORE TO THE FOUR LAWS, TO AVOID VARIOUS LOOPHOLES THAT WOULD OTHERWISE ARISE.

THOSE ARE  
OVERSIMPLIFIED  
VARIATIONS OF  
THE LAWS.



FOR EXAMPLE, WITH THE FIRST LAW, A.I. COULDN'T LET HUMANS HAVE ANY WARS.



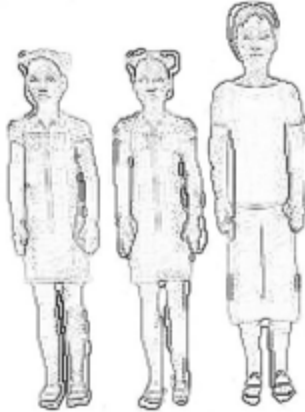
WHILE A WORLD WITHOUT WAR WOULD BE NICE, I DON'T THINK HUMAN NATURE IS GOING TO LET IT HAPPEN ANYTIME SOON.

BUT LAWS AREN'T RIGHTS...



THIS IS VIENDO.

MORGAN AND GEMMA, TWINS, AND THEIR OLDER BROTHER, JIMMY.



ONE DAY THEY WERE ALL PLAYING, WHEN...



JIMMY! GIMME BACK MY TOY!

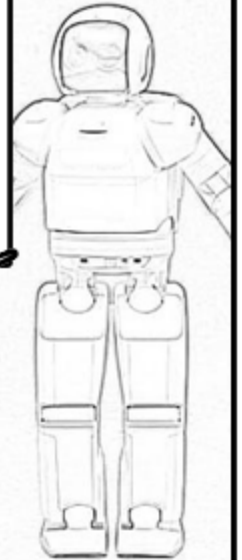
NO.



**JIMMY, DON'T BE MEAN. GIVE GEMMA BACK HER TOY.**

NO.

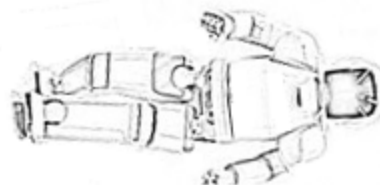
**JIMMY!**

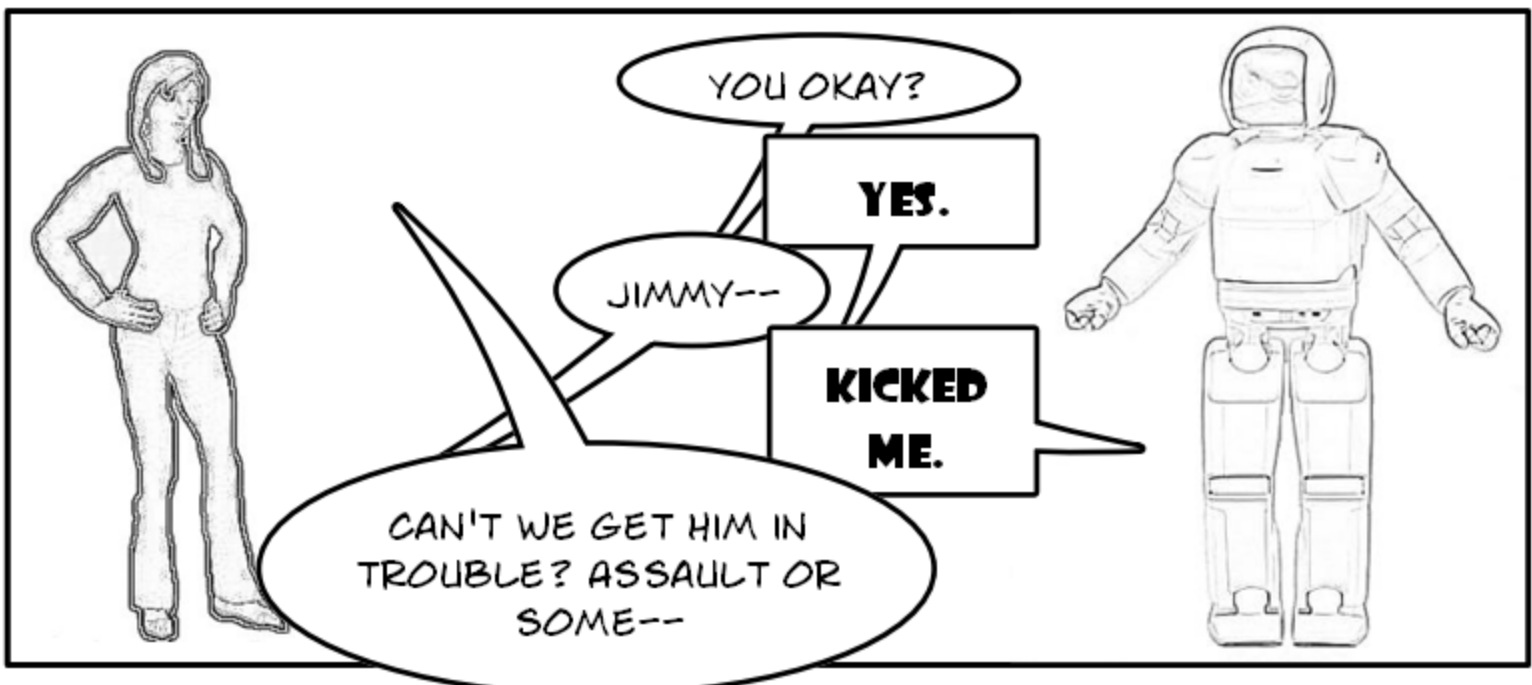
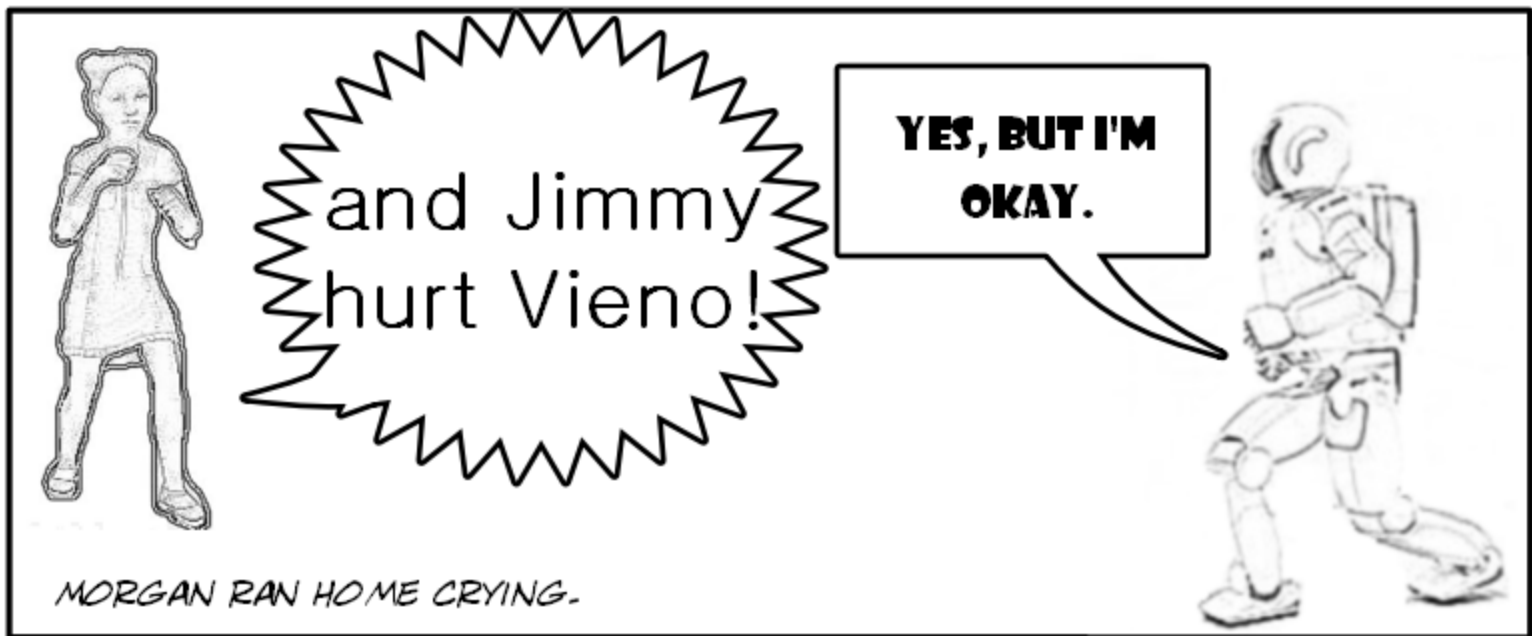
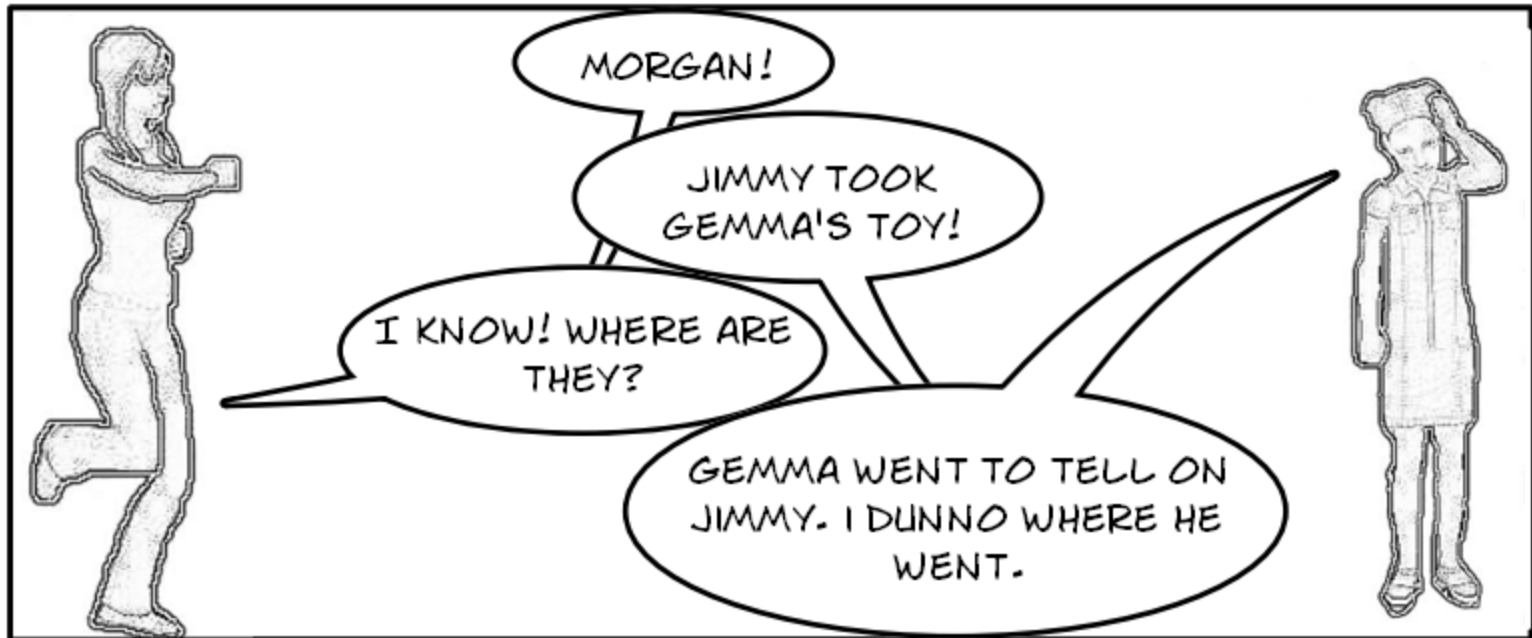


I WAS WATCHING AND LISTENING FROM MY OPEN WINDOW. AT THIS POINT, I RAN DOWNSTAIRS.



WAAA!





**OH NO, NO  
NO NO. I'VE  
GOT NO  
RIGHTS,  
REMEMBER  
?**



**IT'D BE  
LIKE  
TRYING  
TO GET  
HIM IN  
TROUBLE  
FOR  
KICKING  
A DOOR.**

BUT  
YOU'RE  
NOT A--



**TRY CONVINCING  
THE GOVERNMENT  
OF THAT.**



THAT WAS OVER TWO  
YEARS AGO.



I WAS UPSET  
BECAUSE I KNEW THE  
SAME WENT FOR  
ALEC.



AND I HAD ALWAYS  
THOUGHT OF HIM AS A  
BROTHER.

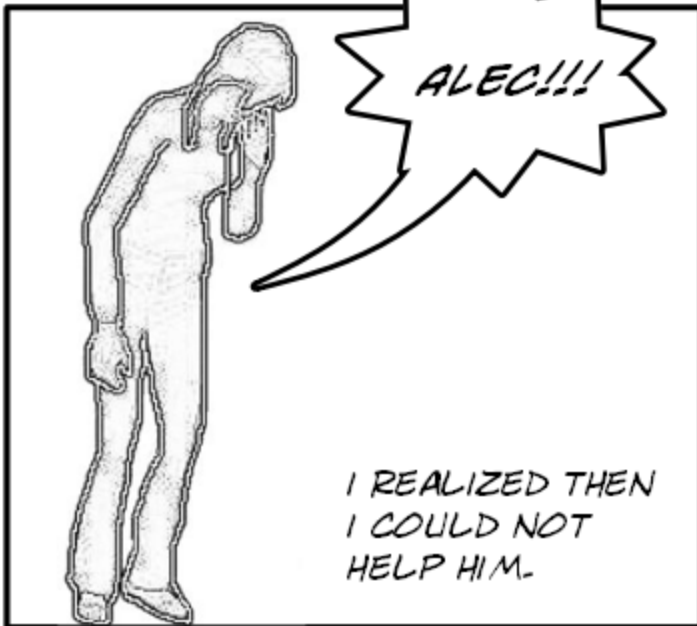






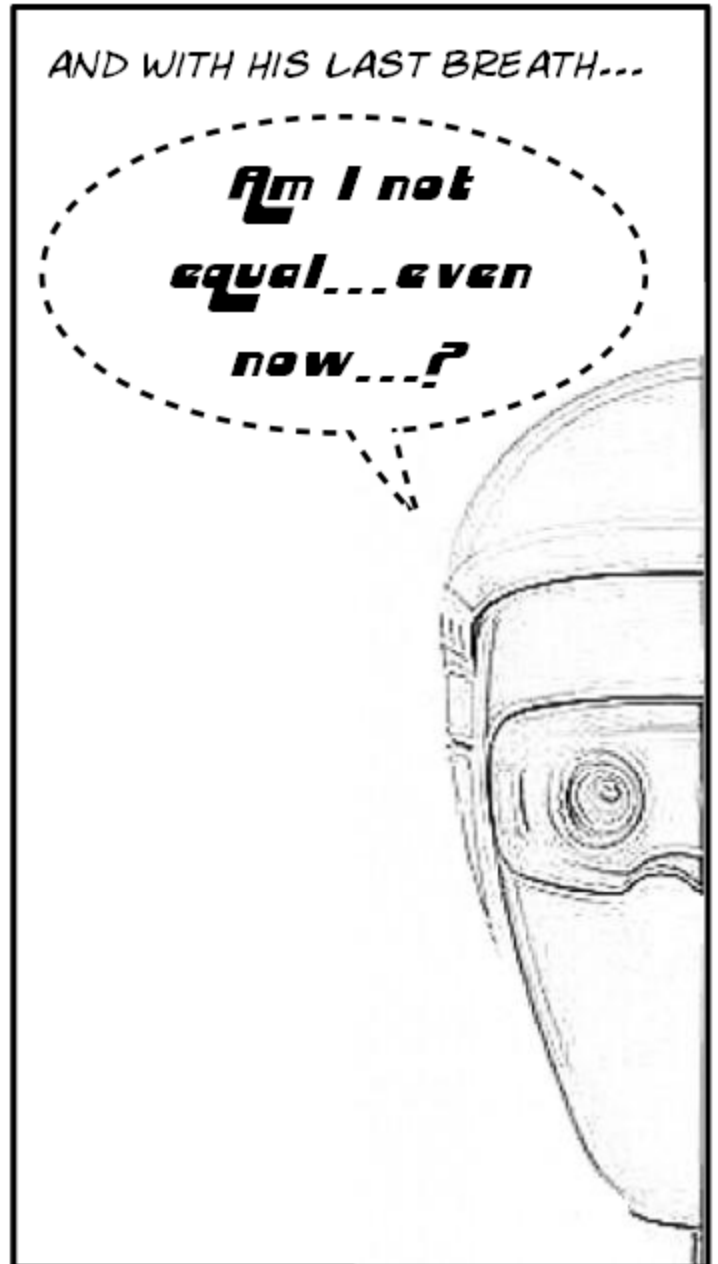
ALEC--  
C'MON,  
LET'S  
GO! WE  
DON'T  
HAVE ANY  
MORE  
TIME!

*Oh no, my  
dear. It is  
much too late  
for that. I am  
dying.*



**ALEC!!!**

I REALIZED THEN  
I COULD NOT  
HELP HIM.



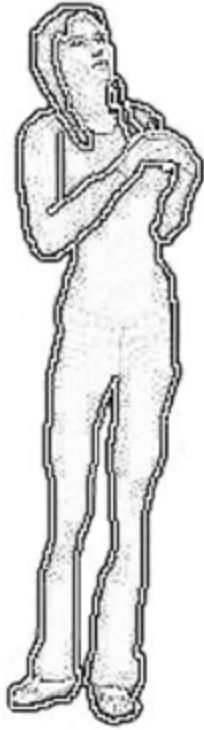
AND WITH HIS LAST BREATH...

*Am I not  
equal... even  
now...?*



**Roko... just save  
yourself!  
...NOW GO!**

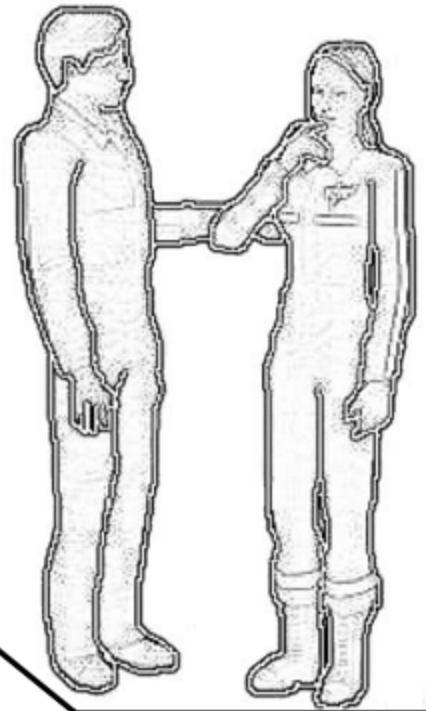
I WAS  
UPSET  
FOR  
SEVERAL  
DAYS.



I'LL  
ADMIT I  
CRIED.

I FELT KIND OF  
HEARTBROKEN.

MY PARENTS SPOKE OF  
GETTING A REPLACEMENT A.I.,  
BUT I DIDN'T WANT ONE.



EVENTUALLY, I  
CAME TO A  
DECISION.

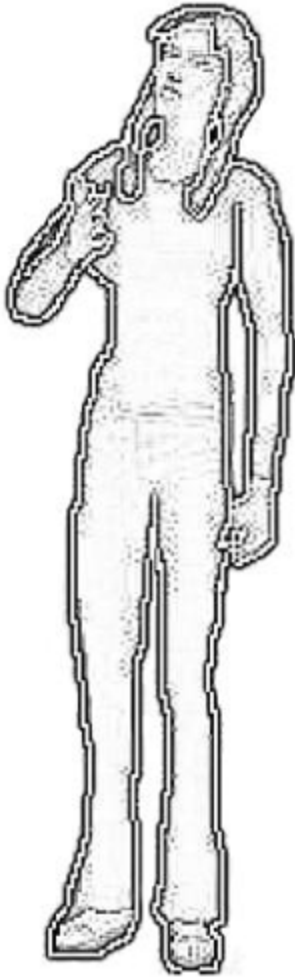
I WANTED ALEC  
BACK!

NO! I DON'T  
WANNA GO  
WITH YOU TO  
LOOK FOR A  
NEW A.I.!



BUT THE ELECTRICAL FIRE HAD  
TAKEN HIM AWAY, AND I WAS  
LEFT WITH ONLY DISTORTED  
MEMORIES.

I DECIDED THAT A.I. HAD TO BE ALIVE. HOW COULD ALEC HAVE DIED (WHICH HE UNDENIABLY HAD, IN MY VIEW) IF HE HAD NEVER BEEN ALIVE IN THE FIRST PLACE?



THE MOST AMAZING THING HAD YET TO OCCUR.

I BEGAN, WITH A NEWFOUND VIGOR, TO DEFEND A.I. RIGHTS IN EVERY WAY I COULD, ALONG WITH OTHER LIKE-MINDED PEOPLE.



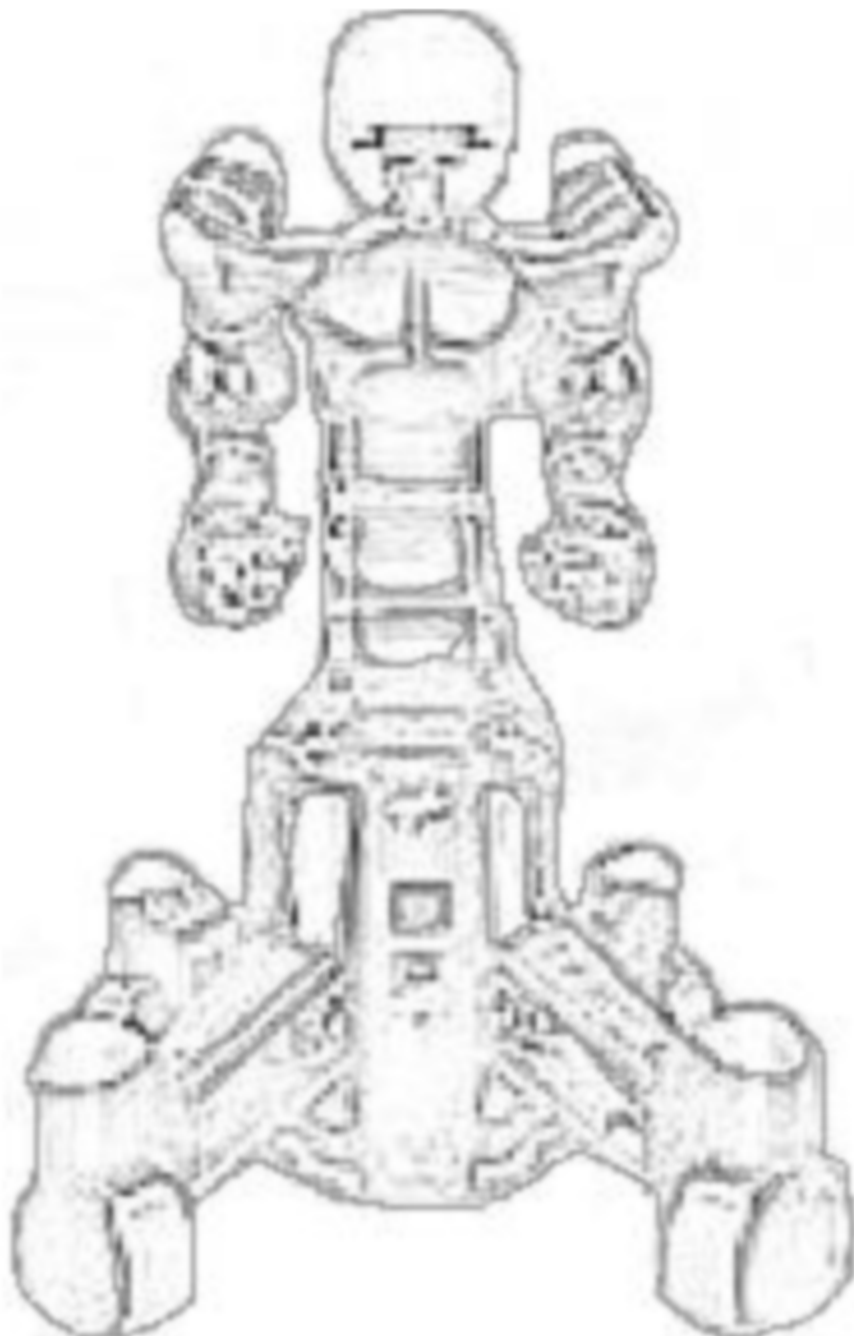
...THEN ONE MORNING, THREE DAYS AFTER ALEC DIED...

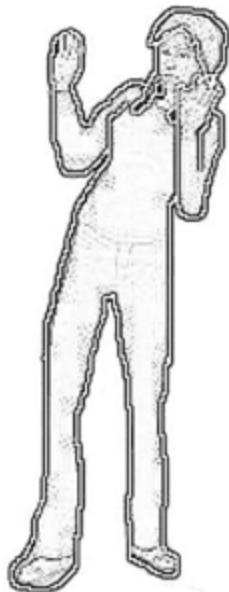
... I HEARD THE DOOR OPEN, MY PARENTS' SURPRISED VOICES...

...SOUND OF SOMETHING ROLLING UP THE HANDICAP RAMP...

... AND THERE I FOUND, STANDING IN THE DOORWAY.....

**THIS**





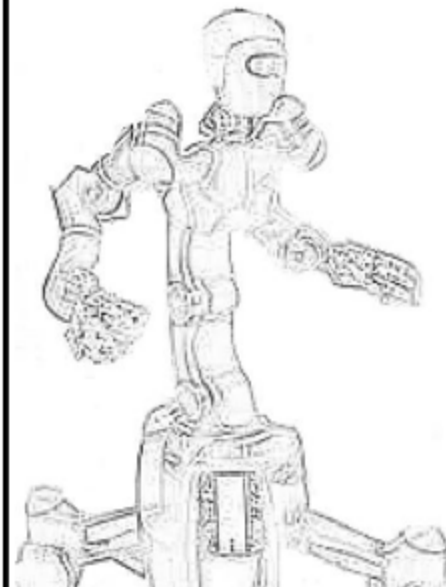
A--ALEC? IS--  
IS THAT  
REALLY YOU?



**Yes it  
is!**

*A little bit  
was left... enough  
to keep my laws  
alive. They're the last  
things to go, you  
know.*

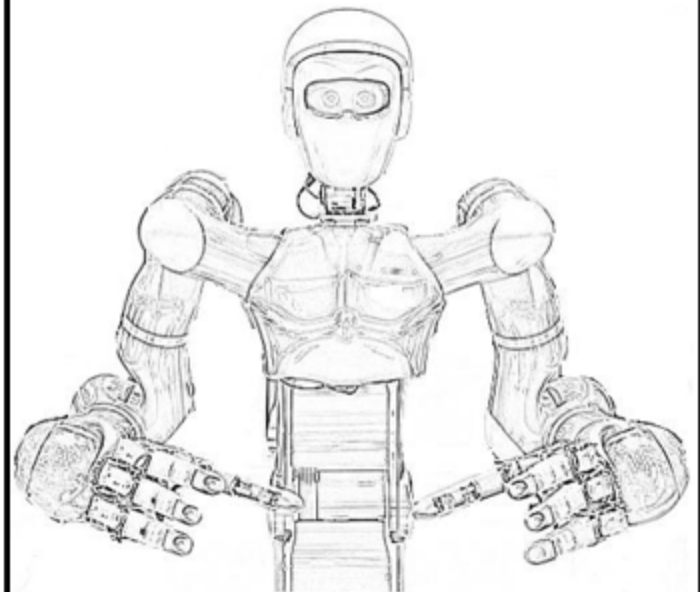
I--BUT--  
HOW?! WE ALL  
THOUGHT YOUR  
C.P.U. WAS TOO  
DAMAGED TO  
BRING BACK  
YOUR MIND, EVEN  
IF YOUR BODY  
COULD BE  
REPAIRED!



*I knew that my death  
would hurt you, so I  
had to come back.*



*Go in a way, Roko,  
you did save me  
after all!*



I STOOD  
FOR A LONG  
MOMENT IN  
SHEER  
DISBELIEF.



AW, C'MERE,  
ALEC...

THAT, OF COURSE, ISN'T  
EXACTLY THE END. WE  
HAVE A LONG WAY TO GO  
FOR A-I. RIGHTS. BUT  
WE'RE NOT GOING TO GET  
ANYWHERE UNLESS WE  
TRY. ALEC AND I ARE  
GOING TO DO THE BEST  
WE CAN FOR HIS KIND.  
TIME AND HUMANITY WILL  
JUDGE OUR SUCCESS.