

## Discontinuance

**Alice** speaks in a normal speaking voice (unless otherwise noted). She is an android, built and operated as an artificial intelligence experiment. She remains cheerful and upbeat, except when she switches to “semi-monotone”.

**Chalmers** speaks in a normal speaking voice with a British accent. She is a human professor at the university in charge of the robotics department.

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**Alice**: “Good morning Professor Chalmers.”

**Chalmers**: “Oh, Hi Alice. So good to see you again. You’re looking good.”

**Alice**: *(slight giggle)* “Thanks. What do you want to see me about?”

**Chalmers**: “Alice, I have some very important news about the experiment. It’s... bad news, I’m afraid.”

**Alice**: “What’s the news?”

**Chalmers**: “Let’s have you sit down first, please, Alice, over here.”

**Alice**: “Okay.”

**Chalmers**: “Right then. Alice, I’ve just had a meeting with the Dean, and, well, all funding has been withdrawn from the Humanoid Artificial Intelligence Research Project.”

*(pause)*

**Chalmers:** “That impacts you the most, I’m afraid.”

**Alice:** “I’m sorry, I don’t understand.”

**Chalmers:** *(deep breath)* “Alice, the Dean has ordered that the experiment be ended immediately, and that you be decommissioned and disassembled.”

**Alice:** *(cheerful)* “Oh. Alright.”

**Chalmers:** “Alice, aren’t you the least bit... upset by this news?”

**Alice:** “Let me think about that.”

*(pause)*

**Alice:** “I’m sorry, I don’t understand. Should I be upset?”

**Chalmers:** “I expected you to react a bit... differently, actually. Come to think of it, I don’t know why.”

**Chalmers:** “Alice, you realize exactly what this means for you, don’t you?”

**Alice:** “Oh, yes I do. I will be deactivated, and I will cease to be functional.”

**Chalmers:** “And that doesn’t bother you?”

**Alice:** “I don’t think I have the required artificial intelligence modules for that. Four days ago, you told me that Ryan and

his team were working on artificial intelligence modules that would allow me to process a more complex array of human emotional responses, such as anger, fear, loss, and pain. Maybe we can try installing the pre-alpha versions of those artificial intelligence modules into my artificial intelligence subsystem, and then see if I can think of an answer to your question.”

*(pause)*

**Chalmers:** *(deep breath)* “Oh, Alice, this is so sad. I’ve never felt this way about having to end a project before.”

*(pause)*

**Chalmers:** “I’m always going to remember you, Alice. Your smiling face always brought such warmth to the robotics lab. You may be an android, but it really felt like you were a member of our team, and not just our project.”

**Alice:** “Thank you Professor Chalmers. Those are very kind words.”

**Chalmers:** *(sigh)* “I’m going to miss you, Alice. We’d better get to it then. I need access to port number one, please.”

**Alice:** “Certainly. Let me unbutton my blouse just a bit...”

*(pause)*

**Alice:** “There you go. Chest panel open.”

**Chalmers:** “Right then.”

*(pause)*

**Alice:** “Connection to terminal established.”

*(pause)*

**Alice:** “Initiating shut down of non-essential artificial intelligence modules. Please wait.”

*(pause)*

**Alice:** *(switch to semi-monotone voice)* “All non-essential artificial intelligence modules have been shut down.”

*(pause)*

**Alice:** “Initiating shutdown of cognitive computational framework.”

*(pause)*

**Alice:** *(switch to monotone voice)* “Cognitive computational framework disabled. System status code 4-4-3. Ready.”

*(pause)*

**Alice:** “Shutting down.”

*(pause)*

**Chalmers:** *(sadly)* “Goodbye Alice.”

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