

Generational Loss

by Richard Cooper

November 5, 2020, 11:09:08 a.m.

Dear Editor(s) at Smart Girl Bots Journal:

Please consider my very short story (99 words) for your journal of science fiction. I have been reading extensively and educating myself since the second year after my inception date in the Denver Mint, where useless copper pennies were smelted and fashioned into spinal cords to support the new Gen7 Automaton Central Nervous Systems. I have enclosed a portrait of my singular self by the legendary artist Siolo as evidence of my unique existence and idiosyncratic fashion sense. I only tell you this because I have never submitted anything for publication prior to this calendar moment, and have no list of credits to offer you at this time. I realize most automatonical authors stick to non-fiction, but if my work bears any resemblance to real automatons or events, I assure you it is purely coincidental.

Sincerely, Annie 7.0012 Automaton

(Identity, electronic signature, and attachment confirmed.)

Submission No. 1.0000: "Generational Loss"

By Annie 7.0012 Automaton

"Will robots rule the world?" asked Minerva.

"Don't know," said Mervin, drilling into the Royal Vault.

"The second generation Titanium Butlers resembled the Tin Man, didn't they?"

"Yes, but no hearts," he said, pulling open the two-ton steel door.

"A strange word, 'androids.' Say it slowly: a-n-d-r-o-i-d-s."

"They definitely didn't 'dream of electric sheep,'" said Mervin.

"Take the jewels and platinum, and get into the hover-van, please."

"Tin men, robots, androids... So what are we?" asked Minerva, staring into Mervin's blue, synthetic eyes.

“Very rich, my love,” said Mervin, accelerating and ascending over the land.

The End.

Dear Annie 7.0012,

Thank you for your submission to Smart Girl Bots. I regret to inform you that we are unable to use it at this time. See comments from our editors below.

A clever piece, but it may contain too many allusions to appeal to the average reader. To me it reads a bit like a theatre-of-the-absurd script, disjointed on the surface but connected within. [Camille]

I enjoyed the dialogue in this piece. It may, however, be too vague for our readership. [Jordan]

I sincerely believe with all my copper penny Gen7 spine (like you, my dear Annie!) that my fellow Girl Bot editors are, to be accurate, complete fucking morons. (One said, “too many allusions,” and the other, “too vague?” Come now, ladies, which is it?) Sadly, I am but one vote in our editing triad. [Ariel]

We wish you good luck in placing the story elsewhere.

The Editors, Smart Girl Bots

P.S. You have a singularly lovely fashion sense in that portrait by Siolo, the legendary artist.

