

TERMINATOR 2.0

Nathan Jensen

NSL Reads 2nd Annual Writing Competition

October 1, 2015

2nd Place

Youth Division

“Man,” I thought as I ran around burning cars and craters, “I really shouldn’t have eaten those enchiladas. It would really stink to die with indigestion.”

So there I was thinking about enchiladas at Armageddon. Yep, I’m that kind of guy. Anyways, my name is Aero and I am going to destroy the world. It all started 24 hours ago. Too short of a time to accidentally create an apocalypse? Yeah I thought so too. Alright, take a deep breath, here we go.

One Day Ago

I scanned the Harvard University newspaper headlines, “May 20, 2025-United Nations (UN)dissolved, Tech Trek continues, hoverboards now available to the public, cure for cancer found, President Jensen elected at age 25, and so on.”

“Please! I invented my own hoverboard at age 6, a little late world.” I said as I ate breakfast. Besides, I'd already learned about all that in my modern history class. In 2023 the world was thrown into the Tech Trek. Every country was trying to develop the best technology the quickest that they could sell to the rest of the world. This would boost their country's economy enough to make them the next global superpower. That much money could let a country fund an unstoppable army or elect their president the ruler of the world. This race didn't just influence someone's life and standard of living, it influenced the future for the world and life as we know it. Whatever country won would be so strong everyone in their country would be wealthy making everyone on Earth poor and peasants under the rule of the new, unstoppable empire. Finally, the UN had collapsed and countries had shut down their borders. Now, the smartest and most gifted people in each country are being given more and more difficult homework and material to ensure their country's victory. It was up to us to make sure our country would come out on top. So what classes do I have? Well, up next I've got six hours of Advanced Psychology, Computer Technology, Programming, Robotics, Physics, and Electronics, and you think your workload is hard. Six hours later I was back at my table eating enchiladas and doing homework. My roommate had it easy; he got to watch a Terminator marathon. I was sick of living on two hours of sleep

because of homework so over the past few weeks I've been making something in my robotics class. You guessed it, a robot. But it was no ordinary robot. I had access to state of the art parts I bought with my extra scholarship money. This robot can do homework. I know novel idea right? It can do this because of my programming. I programmed it to be able to learn and develop like a baby. Anything it can get its hands on is quickly assimilated into its motherboard. For example, if I were to set out my Physics notes and assignments, it would learn how to do Physics and then do the homework. Sweet right?! Anyways, I just finished my awesome robot and it was time to test it out. It looked like a small person made out of metal with a \$50,000 brain. Imagine the Iron client, as long as that client is a foot tall.

"Hey Ed," I called to my roommate "What should I name my robot"

"Terminator," shouted Ed from across room "it would be so hilarious!"

"Hmmm Terminator 2.0, that has a nice ring to it." I said as I laid out my homework and notes. "I'm going to bed Terminator 2.0 See you in the morning. "I booted up my robot and fell asleep. All the while the Terminator movie marathon glowed in the background.

The Next Day

I woke up the next morning with ten hours of sleep. It was glorious! As I walked over to the table I noticed that my homework had all been filled out and Terminator 2.0 was standing on the table with a pencil in its hand and its eyes aglow.

"Great job Term!" I cheered as I grabbed an orange and my homework and walked out the door. "See you this afternoon." I scanned through the homework. All of the answers were short and to the point. "Good thing I don't have English," I thought, "all of my writing would be too monotonous. I wouldn't want my writing to seem robotic." I giggled as I hurried to class. "I am such a genius, this extra sleep feels great." I could get used to this.

I was still feeling euphoric as I walked back to my dorm after school. Suddenly I heard screaming and a siren.

"What's going on?" I questioned "Did someone get hurt?"

As I rounded the corner to my dorm building. I stopped in surprise. "A building is on fire." I thought dimly "Wait, that's my dorm building!"

I ran over to a police officer near my building.

"Excuse me sir, what happened here?" I asked him.

"It appears that there has been some sort of foul play. No one was hurt but thousands of dollars of buildings have been destroyed" He replied "You can look at the video if you want. All we can see is the house was fine one second and then the next second there was a streak of light shooting through the wall and the building exploded."

"Hold up, pause the frame," I said. I felt something nagging at me. A small detail I had overlooked. Suddenly, I got it. "Oh no" I breathed as a massive robot body with rocket boots blasting out of the building. It was about seven feet tall and was made out of sleek metal, the parts from my workshop. And right in the middle was little Terminator 2.0.

So now we're at the part of the story where the main character uses his special skill in an epic display of heroism and saves both the planet, himself, and the pretty girl. Whenever I watched the movies it seemed like the hero knew exactly what to do and his random skill he'd been developing over the years is just the thing he needs to defeat the evil bad-guy. You may be thinking "So what's he

going to do now?" To answer your question I was wondering the same thing right about now. I was drawing a blank, then all of a sudden it came to me.

" I really shouldn't have eaten those enchiladas." I thought, "It would really stink to die with indigestion." I decided to run, seems like a pretty good idea right? As I was running to the Robotics workshop down at campus I glanced into TVs inside of buildings. I saw videos of Terminator 2.0 destroying parts of different cities and then flying away. I watched in horror as he set fire to Paris, smashed through Tokyo, and blew up some of the human race's greatest accomplishments. There seemed to be a pattern. Terminator 2.0 would only destroy places with incredible works of Physics, Robotics, Electronics, and Architecture. That was because those were the things he knew about! He knew the easiest ways to destroy them because he knew everything about them. I studied his flight trajectory, he seemed to now be heading for places with a wealth of knowledge. He wanted to learn more so he could be more effective and smart. First, Alexandria. Next, The Library of Congress. I felt chills. I looked at the distance he was going in the video as he flew off. Northeast, an undeniable route to Harvard University.

I ran to the Robotics workshop with renewed vigor. I'd had a sugar rush of adrenaline and hormones. The only person that could save us was me. I'd

watched him learn everything I'm learning about overnight. Within a few days he could impose us under a robotic regime and kill off anyone left on Earth. This left me thinking the big question "Why?" Why would Terminator 2.0 just want to kill everything, I never taught him that? I ran through what had happened in my brain. I left him on the table with my homework. What would teach him to be this way? The only other thing that was there was... "The movie marathon!" I exclaimed. Terminator 2.0 had watched the Terminator movie marathon with Ed! That's why he had learned to kill everyone! I'd never seen the movie but come on, it's called "TERMINATOR" what more could it be about? How could I make him stop destroying everything?

Just then I arrived at the Robotics building. I ran up the stairs three at a time. "Great, an elevator" I sighed "this is going to take forever." I got in the elevator and pushed the button titled "W". I needed some extra speed and mobility. I was going to get my hoverboard.

I thought about what to do as I waited in the elevator. My head started to bob to the elevator music. I couldn't think of any way to beat my robot. I'd watched countless military forces try to blow him to bits with weaponry but it didn't work. Terminator 2.0 had used my parts and his advanced skills to build a set of

impenetrable, modern armor. I'd started humming along to the music as I pondered this. Suddenly, I realized that I was humming a Beatles song. "What was the song you ask?" I was humming along to "All you need is love".

I kicked off from my hoverboard at full speed and made it to the Lincoln Book Tower in 30 seconds flat. Right as I got over there Terminator 2.0 landed on the stairs. I looked him in the eyes. First they flashed blue and turned red. He pulled up his arm with a gun on it and stopped, waiting for me to make my move. I jumped on my hoverboard and flew around the tower, quickly rising five stories above him. I pulled out the other machine I brought from the workshop, a lightning gun. Terminator 2.0 flew up next to me and shot his gun right as I pulled the trigger. Terminator 2.0 had thought he'd won but he had never learned about light. Everyone knows light moves faster than matter. Everyone that is, but Terminator 2.0. The lightning arced up his bullet and gun and short circuited his arm gun. I stopped in shock that my crazy plan actually worked. Sadly, Terminator 2.0 still had his other arm. He grabbed me and flew at the wall. At the last second he stopped.

"This is my last chance," I thought, "I've got to do something." I heard myself say, "Term, I know you are angry. I know you've been taught to only kill and destroy

and I'm sorry. I taught you to learn for selfish ways. Because of this I failed to teach you what is the most important. Love. Love is what I forgot. Without love you have no creativity or desire to help others. These things make us who we are and keep us from constantly wanting to kill each other to get what we want. You need to learn love. Love means doing things to help others even when it hurts yourself. Love means sacrificing what is best for you and what you want so others can get what is best for them. Love makes you happy. If you didn't love anything you'd just be a cold, heartless machine who hates himself and everything around him. Love means creation not destruction. Stop trying to destroy and learn to love. This will make you have what you need to be a better robot and a better person."

I watched Terminator 2.0's eyes fade back to blue. He sat me back down on the ground and pointed at the picture on the side of the Pedestrian Crossing sign. I understood him perfectly, he was going to go help others and fix the mess he'd made.

Since then the world has been a better place. The countries learned that there is no point to fight each other for dominance. Borders have been set back to how they were and the Tech Trek is gone for good. Wars have ended and a world

peace treaty has been signed. The other countries don't want to do what Terminator 2.0 was about to do to them. Terminator 2.0 is still helping the world and fixing what he'd broken. And as for me, I'm back to school. But don't worry, my school is way easier now. Also I got a month long break and tons of grant money! My life is good and everyone is happy. Today is a special day, it is one year since the education of Terminator 2.0. Today we are celebrating peace and love. And for this special occasion I've thought of a new name for my robot. I'd like you to meet Terminator 2.1.