

AUTOPILOT

"The Car is Okay"  
Episode #1 (Pilot)

Written by

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TEASER

TITLE OVER BLACK

In the years to come, we will see vast improvement in automotive technology.

At the same time, we will see little to no improvement in the human race.

How is that going to work?

EXT. NICE PARTY HOUSE POOL - NIGHT

OPEN CLOSE on party detritus floating in a pool, then RACK FOCUS WIDE to the empty pool area, facing an open sliding door.

AS WE MOVE slowly toward the door, we see the remaining three bleary-eyed party-goers inside slouching on the living room couch, thinking about how they're going to leave.

It was a happening party at its peak around ten last night. The middle-class suburban house was filled with 43 or more giggly thirty-somethings, drinking wine and displaying themselves around the small pool. Now, all that's left are dirty plates, plastic wine glasses, and tables with decaying veggie trays.

WE MOVE through the slider into the...

INT. NICE PARTY HOUSE KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

APPROACHING the group in the living room.

When we're about halfway into the kitchen, WE STOP abruptly and PAN to the left. Look, it's a fourth guy, standing by himself, leaning against the counter, trying to stay upright, taking long pulls off a half-killed bottle of wine.

You can tell SLIM (39) has had practice drinking too much at random parties. He's got that air of confidence about him.

He reaches out and grabs a handful of chips and aims them toward his mouth. About half of them make it in.

INT. LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

The living room people - HARPER, OWEN and LUKE.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HARPER  
Who is he, anyway?

OWEN  
I think Phil brought him from work.

HARPER  
Who's Phil?

LUKE  
(Rolling his eyes)  
It's not Phil. I know who he is.

HARPER  
Pray tell.

LUKE  
He was working on my car.

HARPER  
What?

LUKE  
We started talking and I told him I  
was going to a party.

OWEN  
You fucking invited him?!

LUKE  
No, of course not. He must've  
followed me.

HARPER  
You're kidding.

LUKE  
Well, what am I supposed to do?

HARPER  
Tell him to leave?

They look up. Slim is facing them, teetering in the doorway.

SLIM  
You guys are awesome. What a  
fucking awesome party. You guys are  
fucking... awesome. I mean that.

LUKE  
(Looking down)  
I'm glad you, uh, had a good time.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

SLIM

Thank you, so mushhhh. So fucking  
mushhh.

He staggers toward them. The three wish he didn't exist.

LUKE

(Not friendly)

Listen, we were just about to...  
Are you okay?

Luke stands and approaches Slim with his hands out.

SLIM

Where's the music? You guys were  
playing some really sweet tunes,  
man. Now they're all like... It's  
fucking. It's fucking. Fucking...

(Looking around)

Where's the party?

LUKE

(Nearing his limit)

It's late. The party's over. It's  
over now. We're just about to-

SLIM

Oh man, you guys can't make the  
party go away.

Owen gets up to help.

LUKE

(That's it)

Oh, yes we can.

Luke tries to grab Slim, but he pulls away.

LUKE (CONT'D)

Come on, man. We need to get you,  
get you...

This time when he reaches out, Slim pulls away hard, spins  
around somehow and collapses, whacking his head on the coffee  
table. He's out.

LUKE (CONT'D)

Fuck.

HARPER

(Amused)

What did you do?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

LUKE  
(Complete lack of  
compassion)  
Nothing. He's alright. Look. He's  
breathing. He just passed out or  
something.

He pokes Slim with his foot.

LUKE (CONT'D)  
Hey, come on, man. Come on.

OWEN  
Is he bleeding?

Luke shakes his head, crouches down and looks him over  
without touching him.

LUKE  
There's no blood. He's just out.

OWEN  
What are you going to do with him?

LUKE  
Me?! What do you mean, what am I  
going to do with him?! You act like  
he's mine.

OWEN  
Alright, alright, alright. Help me  
get him up.

The two bend down on opposite sides of him.

OWEN (CONT'D)  
Put his arm around your neck.

They do and then slowly stand him up.

LUKE  
(Loudly in his ear)  
Hey. Hey. Are you in there?

Slim moves his head.

OWEN  
He's getting heavy. I don't know if  
I can-

LUKE  
I know, I know.  
(To Slim)  
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

LUKE (CONT'D)

We're going to try to walk now,  
bud. Are you with me?

Slim comes to and looks around absently.

SLIM

Whuss going on?

LUKE

(To Owen)

Let's get him out of here.

(To Slim)

Come on. One foot in front of the  
other.

SLIM

One foot. One foot.

They move him toward the door.

LUKE

There you go.

Slim smiles about his new friends.

EXT. SIDEWALK - NIGHT

PULLING Owen, Luke and Slim down the sidewalk.

LUKE

What color is your car, man?

SLIM

Iss beige. A beige, 2035 GT Eco  
with custom shit.

LUKE

Beige. Do you know where it  
is? Is it on this street?  
Help me out here, bud. Do you  
know where it is? Listen to  
me. Where is it? Your car.  
Fuck!

SLIM (CONT'D)

(Mumbling)

Custom rims, tinted windows,  
chrome shit... Customized.  
Did it all myself. At home. I  
got all the shit. I  
customized it myself. In my  
fucking gararara...

They stop.

LUKE (CONT'D)

(In his ear)

Hey! Do you see the car?!

(Slim looks at him)

The car. Do you see your car?!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SLIM

Thass it.

They're standing next to it.

OWEN

This is your car? You're sure?

He nods.

LUKE

Alright, let's get him around to  
the driver's side.

They ambulate around the car and somehow unlock and open the door with little help from Slim.

Then, they drop him onto the seat. Owen arranges his legs and buckles the seatbelt, while Luke opens the passenger door and wakes up the touch screen.

CLOSE SCREEN, as the navigation home page comes to life. He touches the destination box and presses *H* on the keyboard that pops up. *HOME* spells out in the box, and he presses *Start*. The screen changes to *drive* mode.

RESUME the three guys and the car. Luke and Owen close their doors and the electric motor wakes up. The lights pop on, brakes release and the car makes a few more *CLICKY, WHIRRY* sounds and its ready.

Slim looks out the driver's window at Owen, who steps back, smiles and gives Slim a sarcastic salute. Slim smiles and salutes back. Then, the car drives off into the darkness.

INT. SLIM'S CAR - NIGHT

Out the front window past Slim as the car drives confidently, quietly down the empty boulevard. Slim lies back and takes it all in.

EXT. INTERSECTION - CONTINUOUS

HIGH ANGLE, WIDE as the light turns red and the car slows and comes to a safe, comfortable stop.

INT. SLIM'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

On Slim as he waits for the light to change. He begins to nod off, eyes blink closed, then open, then closed.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Then, he pries them wide open and makes one last attempt to figure out what's going on in his world. Then, he's out.

EXT. INTERSECTION - CONTINUOUS

The light turns green and the car starts up and moves gently through the intersection and beyond.

SLOW FADE OUT.

DESERT SOUNDS

In black, WE HEAR the hot, dry breath of a desert morning - flying bugs, whistles of air.

QUICK CUT TO:

INT. SLIM'S CAR - MORNING

TIGHT on Slim, bleached-out from the morning sun, which has chosen his face to focus all its intensity. He awakens and clenches his eyes tight. What is that? It's bad.

Slowly, painfully he peaks out at the world through narrow slits.

As the truth slowly begins to seep into his alcohol withered brain, his priority shifts from worrying about a body ravaged by a nasty hangover to contemplating the end of time.

EXT. DESERT SALT FLAT - CONTINUOUS

WIDE. Slim's car is parked slap-dab in the middle of nothing. Tire tracks trail behind the car twenty or more miles to a rim of tall rocky hills that surround the flat, dead, empty, salt floor. No trees, no brush and it's getting hotter by the second.

And there sits Slim, staring motionless into his future.

QUICK FADE OUT.

END TEASER

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ACT ONE

INT. DAVE'S GT OFFICE - EARLY MORNING

CLOSE ON DAVE WALKER'S face, as he sleeps crumpled up on his ultra-modern, vegan leather couch. He's 34, seldom exercises, and isn't terribly attractive. But the company he started with his partner DARIUS RICE is climbing the Forbes 500. So, he's okay.

A phone RINGS. After a few more rings, he stirs. His back hurts. He winces. RING, RING. Without opening his eyes, he reaches up and presses a button on his ear piece.

DAVE  
(Without opening his eyes)  
Yeah.

DARIUS (V.O.)  
(On phone)  
You got to come down here right away.

DAVE  
What?

DARIUS  
(Serious)  
He's sick, Dave.

Dave shoots straight up.

DAVE  
Sick. How can he be sick? What did you do to him?

DARIUS  
What the fuck. I didn't do anything-

DAVE  
(Losing it)  
I mean, you know, for him. For Him. What did you do for him, Darius? Jesus.

DARIUS  
Just get down here.

He slips on his crocs and heads for the door.

He has the corner office about four floors up, with windows facing sparkly, white, Silicon Valley corporate buildings and fresh, new landscaping.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DAVE

What are his symptoms?

DARIUS

Not hungry. Tired acting.

The office is modest and crowded with a small desk, meeting table, and bookshelves jammed with thick technical books and drawings. A big company logo is framed on the wall - GT (for Global Transport.)

He opens the sliding glass door into...

INT. GT OPEN OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

WE PULL Dave as he walks briskly through the large, colorful space, filled with cluttered desks and collaboration pods, heading toward the elevators. It's too early yet for most employees.

DAVE

Daycare wouldn't take him?

DARIUS

I didn't even try.

DAVE

Where is he now?

DARIUS

Lying on my couch.

DAVE

I was afraid this would happen.

DARIUS

You were?

DAVE

That place is a fucking hotbed of disease.

DARIUS

I know. But what are we supposed to do?

Dave passes a cube belonging to PARKER. She stops him.

PARKER

Hey Dave. Got a minute?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DAVE  
(Rushed)  
What's up?

PARKER  
I just want to know if you're going  
to be able to make the bug bash  
this afternoon.

DAVE  
If it's on my calendar...

PARKER  
It is.

Dave continues walking away from her.

DAVE  
Then, I'll try.

PARKER  
(Calling after him)  
It's important!

DAVE  
I know.

PARKER  
Seriously!

DARIUS  
We got that talk show this morning,  
you know.

DAVE  
Why do you think I spent the night  
here?

He presses the down button for the elevator.

DARIUS  
Did you bring anything to wear?

DAVE  
Oh shit.

DARIUS  
It's TV.

DAVE  
I think I have something in the  
car.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

DARIUS  
Do you need to borrow a shirt?

DAVE  
(Winces)  
Might have to.

BEAT

DARIUS  
I don't know what you have against  
my shirts.

DAVE  
They're just...  
(Making an icky face)  
We have different tastes.

The elevator comes.

INT. GT ELEVATOR - CONTINUOUS

Dave gets in and presses 1.

DARIUS  
Yeah. My good taste versus your bad  
taste.

DAVE  
Whatever. Why are you here so  
early?

DARIUS  
Testing that new camera.

DAVE  
Which one?

DARIUS  
You know. That new Japanese...

DAVE  
Oh yeah. The Denso something. Is it  
any good?

DARIUS  
Fuck yeah. It's got some insane  
resolution. We got detail down to  
like an inch from 200 feet.

DAVE  
Whoa. Will it work if you're going  
60 miles an hour?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DARIUS

So far, very low image retention.  
Eerily. High framerate. I'm testing  
burn-in now.

DAVE

I need speed.

DARIUS

It puts out more bits than your  
shit knows what to do with.  
Allegedly.

The door opens.

INT. GT LOBBY HALL - CONTINUOUS

PULLING Dave as he exits the elevator down the hall away from  
the impressive lobby with a large GT logo sculpture thing,  
blinking and spinning.

Off on the left side are open doors leading into a large,  
shiny cafeteria/meeting space.

DAVE

I'm so fucking hungry.

DARIUS

When was the last time you ate?

DAVE

I don't remember.

DARIUS

I got a protein bar you can have.

DAVE

What kind?

DARIUS

Does it matter?

DAVE

Yeah. You know I hate the one with  
all the berries and shit. The seeds  
get stuck in my teeth.

DARIUS

Sorry. This one is berries and  
shit.

Dave waves to a few early employees as they pass him,  
smiling.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DAVE

When does this fucking cafeteria  
open?

DARIUS

Ten.

DAVE

I'm firing that fucking food  
vendor!

DARIUS

You can't fire them. We just signed  
a new contract.

DAVE

They're never open and their food  
sucks.

DARIUS

I agree. But you didn't want to pay  
more so this is what we got.  
Everybody hates them.

DAVE

I don't remember signing any  
contract. When did I do that?!

DARIUS

Last month.

DAVE

Why would I do that? I thought we  
were going to bid it out.

DARIUS

We did. They were the cheapest.

A double glass door opens automatically, as he approaches.

EXT. GT CAMPUS STREET - CONTINUOUS

WE continue PULLING Dave, as he leaves the office building  
and heads toward a crosswalk leading to a three-story factory  
building.

He has to wait for some driverless multi-car shuttles to  
pass, some carrying people, others heaped with boxes and car  
parts. We can see way down the street past five or six more  
buildings. Again, the GT logo is everywhere.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DAVE  
(Shaking his head)  
Oh God. This place is getting to me.

DARIUS  
Sorry. Do you want to quit?

DAVE  
No... I guess not. The perks are too good.

DARIUS  
We just need a vacation.

DAVE  
How can you even think about a vacation?

DARIUS  
I just did, that's how.

Dave opens the door into the factory building.

INT. GT RESEARCH HALL - CONTINUOUS

PULLING Dave down a narrow industrial hall, with exposed pipes overhead and safety signs plastered all over.

DAVE  
How is he doing?

DARIUS  
Uh, sleeping I think.

DAVE  
That's not normal. He's usually running all over the place.

DARIUS  
I know.

DAVE  
What do you think it is?

DARIUS  
It's nothing. Just a bug.

Dave presses his thumb on a sensor by a door labeled simply, *Research*. The door snaps open and Dave enters.

INT. GT LAB 1 - CONTINUOUS

PULLING Dave through the large space, filled with lab tables, car parts stacked high, and a GT test car on blocks, missing doors and seats. No one is there this early.

Dave presses a button on his ear piece to hang up, then calls across the room.

DAVE

Darius?

He rises from behind a lab table.

DARIUS

Shhh.

Darius is good-looking, tall, black, wears glasses, Dave's age.

DAVE

(Approaching Darius)

What's wrong?

DARIUS

He's sleeping.

Dave points to a tiny black object connected to an apparatus.

DAVE

This the sensor?

DARIUS

Yeah.

Dave looks the sensor over, then catches up with Darius heading to his office cubicle in the back corner.

DAVE

Cool. So you think it's better than the CV-5?

DARIUS

Lightyears. But there's no history. CV-5 has history.

Dave steps behind the cubicle wall. There he is on the couch.

DAVE

This isn't good.

DARIUS

Ah. It's just a bug.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ANGLE ON COUCH. It's Shep, a large rescue dog - part doodle, part something big. Dave sits next to him and gently pats his side.

DAVE  
Can you take him in?

DARIUS  
Me? I've got way too much to do and so do you. Can't Parker do it?

DAVE  
She hates doing dog stuff.

DARIUS  
Then, leave him here, I guess.

BEAT.

DAVE  
No, I'll take him.

DARIUS  
Are you sure?

Dave looks around. Sees a pushcart.

DAVE  
Help me get him on the cart.

Dave rolls the cart over next to the couch.

Darius shakes his head and helps Dave lift the dog. He's heavy and squirms a lot. They have to adjust him so his head doesn't loll over the edge.

DARIUS  
You really don't have to do this.

DAVE  
I know. I want to. He's sick and needs a vet.

DARIUS  
He doesn't.

DAVE  
Better to be safe.

DARIUS  
You're crazy.

INT. DAVE'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

Dave is buckled in the backseat, with the dog draped over his lap. The car (one of his Global Transport robocars) is driving him, gently and confidently.

He's stroking the dog's side.

CAR (V.O.)  
 (Friendly, calm female  
 voice)  
 Dave. You have a call from work.  
 It's John Fenderman. Do you want to  
 take it?

DAVE  
 (To car)  
 Yeah.

CLICK.

DAVE (CONT'D)  
 Hi, John. What's up?

JOHN (V.O.)  
 (On phone)  
 You going to be in the office  
 anytime soon?

DAVE  
 Not really.

JOHN  
 Well, we got version 4.5 ready to  
 prop. Want me to wait?

DAVE  
 No, no. Does it have all the buy-  
 offs?

JOHN  
 All except yours.

DAVE  
 I checked it last night. It's fine.  
 Go ahead and pull the trigger.

JOHN  
 Okay, then. When will you-

Suddenly, the car SCREECHES to a stop. The seatbelt stops Dave, but the 200-pound dog nearly flies off his lap.

(CONTINUED)



ACT TWO

GLOBAL TRANSPORT PR. VIDEO

Exciting MUSIC pulses under SHOTS of the car driving in dramatic, colorful locations, with graphics to support.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

This year's sales are through the roof for the amazing robocars from Global Transport. With all the kinks worked out, today's robocars from GT are all about pure driving pleasure.

The high-end model robocar self-drives speedily down a straightaway and handily through twists and turns.

Graphics point out the sensors.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

Race down byways with one or more smart electric engines, powered by a state-of-the-art battery pack and charged by a solar skin painted onto the smooth exterior surface. Internal sensors watch for changes in the drive train. External visual and auditory sensors, inside and out, watch and listen for changes in the environment. Add to this lidar, GPS, and a proprietary communication system that connects automatically with vehicles nearby.

Graphic animates integration of the features.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

Then, integrate all this with a state of the art AI system and you have the total transportation package.

MONEY SHOT of a sexy robocar in action with logo animation.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

The robocar is the one technology that will solve our transportation problems, as well as save our planet from the ravages of climate change.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NARRATOR (V.O.) (CONT'D)  
Simply put, Global Transport robo-  
vehicles keep you and the  
environment safe, and get you where  
you want to go.

EXT. WORKSITE - DAY

Two construction guys BANKS and MAC are standing by MATEO'S shiny new red Chevy robotruck, as he proudly points things out. It's parked in the dirt next to a large eight-story cookie-cutter apartment complex under construction.

BANKS  
How many horses?

MATEO  
Fifteen hundred.

BANKS  
You're kidding?

MATEO  
It smokes, man.

MAC  
Yeah, but what's the range?

MATEO  
Like five hundred.

MAC  
Five hundred? Fuck.

MATEO  
It's got this huge backseat, a  
massive bed. And look at this shit.

Mateo motions them to the front. Then, he opens the hood and smiles.

BANKS  
Where's the engine?

MATEO  
It ain't got no engine. It's got a  
frunk!  
(He laughs)

BANKS  
What the hell's that?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MATEO

It's like a trunk but it's in the front. Get it. Frunk.

MAC

Yeah, I get it.

Banks and Mac start to back away.

BANKS

Looks pretty cool, man.

MAC

Yeah, but I still can't believe it's got more power than a gas truck.

MATEO

You want to see? I'll show you.

BANKS

Nah.

MATEO

Right now. C'mon.

BANKS

Nah. We got to get back to work. Thode's going to kick our ass if we don't get that flooring done today.

MATEO

Fuck Thode. It'll just take a second. One second. C'mon.

Banks and Mac stop.

BANKS

Seriously, man.

MAC

We'll do it some other time.

MATEO

Wait.

He looks around, sees a hill rising up 50 feet at the other end of the project.

MATEO (CONT'D)

See that hill.

MAC

Yeah.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

MATEO

We'll drive up the hill and come right back.

BANKS

That hill? Like go right up the side of it?

MATEO

Hell, yeah.

MAC

It's like a 45 degree angle.

MATEO

It's not a problem. I tell you, man. It's four-wheel drive. It's got the horses. C'mon, c'mon.

Bank and Mac look at each other.

MAC

Okay, Banks you go. I'll wait here.

BANKS

(To Mateo)

Up the hill and back. That's it, right?

MATEO

That's it. Hop in. Wooohooo!

Banks and Mateo jump in.

INT. MATEO'S TRUCK - CONTINUOUS

Mateo touches the screen and presses *Manual mode*. The truck comes to life - gear shifts, brakes release, and it's ready. Mateo punches the pedal.

All four wheels spin out and the truck flies like lightening down the dirt road toward the hill. Faster and faster, topping 60 in a couple of seconds.

EXT. HILL BY CONSTRUCTION SITE - CONTINUOUS

When he comes to the base of the hill, he slows slightly to jump over the edge of the road. Then, he punches it. Except for slipping on a few rocks and sliding sideways on some loose dirt, the truck climbs the 45 degree slope with ease in a few seconds.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

When they reach the top, Mateo stops and waves out the window to Mac, and a few other dumbfounded workers. Banks and Mateo WHOOP it up.

ANGLE ON Mac as he shakes his head and waves back, duly impressed, but not so sure this was a good idea.

As he walks back to the work site, he passes Thode and gives him a small wave.

We stay on Thode watching Mateo's antics. He's just about had it with his crappy work ethic.

INT. FUTURE NOW CONVENTION HALL - DAY

Futurist DR. HUGH M. TURTURRO is being interviewed by LEX FELMAN on a remote set for the *Lex on the Future* podcast. A small crowd has gathered around the booth to watch.

Turturro (53) is thin, full of himself, and works hard to look the part of a world-class intellectual. A poster of his book *Self-Driving the Future* stands behind him.

TURTURRO

As I predicted well over ten years ago, there are over half a billion self-driving vehicles on the road today.

FELMAN

To what do you attribute this incredible popularity?

TURTURRO

Well, as I talk about in my book...

FELMAN

(Holding the book up)  
*Self-Driving the Future.*

TURTURRO

Yes. The popularity of these vehicles was driven by necessity. Transportation needed to become safer for both people and the planet, and it needed to be sustainable. With those factors in mind, the popularity of self-drive was inevitable.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FELMAN

And of course the miraculous proliferation of the technology. Who could've imagined it?

TURTURRO

Well, I did. But, yes. It took the creation, invention and discovery of many new technologies, from solar power to artificial intelligence to things like eddy current brakes, and then the many synergies that worked to co-mingle the mindsets and then tap into the global, interdisciplinary, practice-oriented, and multistakeholder nature of AI methodologies.

FELMAN

(Not really following him)  
Inevitable.

TURTURRO

Precisely.

FELMAN

So, where do you see us going, as a nation, as a people, as a planet, as a universe?

This is Turturro's finest moment, when he is asked to declare the future of the world to the masses, who hang on to every word. He breathes it in, treasures the opportunity.

TURTURRO

We have reached a nexus, if you will. The point where everything connects, comes together, coalesces, blends into a oneness. I coined the term *glitch-free*.

FELMAN

Ah, yes.

TURTURRO

It's the point where a technology plateaus. The future is all about implementing new modes, such as flying cars and spacecraft that take us to new solar systems and enable us to communicate with alien beings that share our love of the universe.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

FELMAN

Hey. I'll take two tickets.

Turturro smiles condescendingly.

INT. MIA TV STUDIO - DAY

Dave and Darius are guests are on the set of *Mia*, a late morning talk show.

MIA

So Dave, I've noticed that the voice in my robocar is not like those old robot voices you used to hear in sci-fi movies.

DAVE

That's because we give them a "personality."  
(Air quotes)

MIA

(Shocked)  
Personality?

DAVE

That's what we call it. But of course it's not real. It's just made to sound real.

DARIUS

Don't listen to him. It is real.

DAVE

Darius. We have to talk.

They giggle.

DARIUS

You make it sound like it's one of those robot vacuum cleaners. It's actually very sophisticated.

DAVE

It's still not real.

DARIUS

But it's damn close.

DAVE

All it does is follow instructions mostly, provide feedback, ask questions.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MIA  
What if it disagrees?

DAVE  
It can't "disagree." It's a machine.

DARIUS  
What Dave means to say is it doesn't "know" what it's doing.

MIA  
That doesn't sound very safe.

DAVE  
He means, it doesn't "know." It doesn't have the ability to "know" anything.

Mia looks confused.

DARIUS  
Only humans can "know" something. The AI program merely performs basic logical operations.

DAVE  
Strictly logical. Unlike people.

DARIUS  
Most people.

Giggle.

MIA  
Okay, let's just assume we "know" what you're talking about.

DAVE  
It's all strictly logical.

MIA  
I'm sure it is.

Laugh.

MIA (CONT'D)  
So the question is, what does the car do when the human asks it to do something illogical?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

DAVE

Good question. The AI is governed by something we call the *prime directive*.

MIA

Oh great.

Laugh.

DARIUS

No, no, no. It's not that bad. It means that any decision or calculation the AI makes must be based on safety. Prime directive - safety at all costs.

MIA

So it can't just decide to run over a pedestrian.

DARIUS

Hmm.

MIA

Like if it decides it doesn't like their outfit.

DARIUS

Well, that's extreme, but yes.

MIA

So getting back to my question...

DAVE

Yes. If the car determines that a driver is being unsafe, it immediately corrects the problem.

DARIUS

Like if the driver falls asleep and starts driving over the line, the car steers it back.

DAVE

But if the driver for some reason wants to be unsafe, it may appear the car is in conflict with the wishes of the driver.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

DARIUS

And the driver may see that as an error or that there's something wrong with the program, but it's really more like a... difference of opinion.

Laugh. Dave shakes his head.

INT. SLIM'S CAR - DAY

CLOSE on the start button by the steering wheel. Slim reaches in and presses it. Nothing. He presses multiple times. The same.

PAN with his hand to the screen. He touches it and it wakes up. Everything appears normal, except the buttons are greyed out. He tries pressing them anyway. The battery meter shows the charge is good.

ANGLE on Slim. His t-shirt is covering the open side window to keep out the sun, which is rapidly approaching the horizon.

He reaches into the storage space between the back seats, and pulls out another energy bar and a water jug. He stares at the jug, then decides to hold off and puts it back.

He settles back and stares at the motionless landscape.

EXT. DESERT SALT FLAT - DAY

Slim's car, the sun and the endless white floor.

FADE TO BLACK.

END ACT TWO

ACT THREE

EXT. GREEN RESIDENTIAL BYWAY - DAY

A smart-looking, medium-luxury GT robocar passes by. It's a nice suburban neighborhood.

INT. JAMES' CAR - CONTINUOUS

JAMES YESLER (40s), a few gray streaks in his receding hairline, is kicked back in the driver's seat with a self-satisfied smile. His friend STEVE is on the phone.

JAMES  
This weekend, I got the house all  
to myself.

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. STEVE'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

As he drives.

STEVE  
Cool. Any plans?

JAMES  
(Smiling)  
Welllll...

STEVE  
Shit. You aren't thinking what I  
think you're thinking.

JAMES  
It's the perfect time. Gotta do it.

STEVE  
Holy shit!

JAMES  
Why not?

STEVE  
Why?! Because it's not... you know.

JAMES  
Listen, we've been sneaking around  
shitty motels for six months. It's  
time for a change.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

STEVE

Whatever.

JAMES

Madison will never know. Unless someone like you tells her. God. She'd kill me.

STEVE

And she'd have every right to.

JAMES

I know you think it's immoral and sick.

STEVE

I think it's not right.

JAMES

Depends on your definition of right.

STEVE

I think it's not going to end well.

JAMES

What could go wrong?

INT. CARL'S BEDROOM - DAY

CARL and MADISON are lying in bed, recovering from a wild romp. This isn't the first time the two have gotten together on the sly.

She sits up on the edge of the bed and starts putting on her bra.

MADISON

So, were you able to get on the same flight?

CARL

Yup. First class, two rows behind you.

MADISON

Ha. Perfect.

CARL

Who's this Jim guy anyway?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MADISON

A dweeb from work. I'll lose him  
after the meeting. Shouldn't take  
long.

He crawls over and rubs her shoulders. She purrs.

CARL

And while you and Jim are busy,  
I'll check into the room and start  
chilling the champagne.

He starts kissing her neck.

MADISON

Carl, I'd love to, but... I got to  
go. Really.

CARL

Ah, you're no fun.

MADISON

No. James finding out is no fun.

Carl releases her and lies back down.

CARL

Ah, what's that wuss going to do?  
Throw a hissy fit?

She doesn't answer.

INT. JAMES' GARAGE - DAY

James pulls in and parks next to his wife's almost-identical  
GT robocar. He shuts the car down and gets out.

INT. JAMES' CAR - CONTINUOUS

CLOSE SCREEN on the communication icon, which looks like an  
antenna. It starts blinking rapidly.

INT. WIFE'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

Out the passenger window, WE see James close his car door and  
walk away.

MOVE IN TIGHT on the communication icon in his wife's car, as  
it starts blinking rapidly.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CUT multiple times between the two communication icons exchanging data.

INT. JAMES' KITCHEN - DAY

James enters from the garage, just as his wife Madison is entering from the backyard sliding door. Oops. They turn to each other and freeze.

JAMES

Hi. Umm. How was your day?

MADISON

Good. Yours?

JAMES

Same old same old.

MADISON

That's good.

He pauses for a beat, then continues O.S. She walks to the island and lets out a breath.

EXT. FREEWAY - DAY

Late afternoon rush hour and the lanes are jammed with slow vehicles. We find Mateo's red truck creeping along in the lane next to the fast-running H.O.V. lane.

INT. MATEO'S TRUCK - CONTINUOUS

After a long day at work, all he wants to do is drive his truck fast. He looks at the speedometer - 23. That's not going to do it. He inches forward a bit longer, then something snaps.

He looks in the side mirror and sees a break in the traffic. The car in front moves ahead. He cranks the wheel to the left and floors the pedal.

He flies like greased lightning into the H.O.V. lane - 30, 40, 50, topping 60 in two seconds. He's a mad man. Gives a loud WHOOP! Faster and faster. His hair is on fire. He starts to push past 70. Then, something kicks in.

The truck starts to slow. In a matter of seconds, he's down to 53. He slams down on the pedal, but the truck refuses to pick up speed. He pounds the steering wheel. Pumps the pedal. Nothing.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Then, a car veers into his lane ahead and the truck automatically slows rapidly to keep from hitting it. And there he sits, driving a fast, powerful truck that refuses his orders. He pounds the wheel and settles back.

INT. SAL'S GARAGE - DAY

Mateo's friend SAL is in the process of unscrewing the bottom plate of Mateo's frunk. The last bolt.

SAL  
That's it.

WE PULL BACK. Mateo is leaning on the fender, watching him. Sal is the closest thing he has to a car expert.

MATEO  
What now?

SAL  
You grab the other side and we'll pull it out.

With a great deal of effort the two manage to remove the bottom plate. They look in.

MATEO  
What the fuck.

There's nothing recognizable. Just a bunch of colored wires, pipes and aluminum boxes.

SAL  
I told you, man. You can't do nothing with it. It's all computer shit.

MATEO  
(Reaching in and grabbing some wires)  
Can't we just like cut the wires to the computer or something?

SAL  
Then, it don't run.

MATEO  
Come on Sal, you're a fucking genius.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SAL

Not with this shit, man. Sorry.  
You're just going to have to live  
with it. If you want to go fast, I  
got an old gas-powered Chevy you  
can have.

Mateo pounds the fender.

INT. GT OPEN OFFICE BY CONFERENCE POD - DAY

Darius and Dave are attending a bug meeting with five program managers. Twenty or so bugs are listed on a digital whiteboard. A big monitor displays a PowerPoint slide with a list of customer complaints.

DAVE

(Points to the whiteboard)  
These are bugs.  
(Points to the slide)  
These aren't. Simple. Bugs are  
something wrong with the code.  
These don't point out anything  
wrong. They're all by design.

DARIUS

But I think Clair has a good point.

CLAIR is in a tough spot. The freakin' CEO of the company is questioning her.

CLAIR

I agree. They're usability issues.  
But-

DAVE

I can't help it if people don't  
take the time to learn how to use  
the car.

DARIUS

But what about ease of use.  
Obviously, people don't find them  
easy to use at times.

Clair walks over to the slides.

CLAIR

And some of the issues just don't  
make sense.  
(Pointing to one)  
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CLAIR (CONT'D)

Like, they try to rotate their tires or replace a part and they say the car screams at them.

DAVE

They're doing it wrong. Read the manual.

CLAIR

A lot of people have said they would like to turn off the safety features...

DAVE

Well, they can't. By design.

CLAIR

(Pointing to other examples)

Several people have complained that the car just pulls over and stops for no reason. Or it takes them to the wrong place. Or goes into alarm mode for no reason.

Clair steps back, as Dave gets up to look closer at the slide.

CLAIR (CONT'D)

But the overall sense I'm getting, is that the AI makes the cars too... human.

DAVE

They're anthropomorphizing the cars. We can't help that.

CLAIR

The comments sometimes refer to them as crazy people that can't be controlled, hyper children, bad bosses, uh, mentally challenged, you know...

DAVE

Retards.

CLAIR

Well, I wasn't going to say that, but...

DAVE

(Snapping at her)  
I can read.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

CLAIR

So...

She sits.

DARIUS

(To Dave)

Version 4.5 is live now. Are we in trouble?

Dave gets super defensive. He stares at the list, wondering how to react.

DAVE

Of course not. Get the usability team on it. Improve the documentation. It's nothing. The vast majority of cars are running fine.

CLAIR

That's true. But...

DAVE

We can't waste our time on a few outlier cases.

CLAIR

Well, there's more than a few. There's actually a pattern.

DAVE

Okay, well. Honestly, I wouldn't waste much time on this. We have 5.0 to worry about.

CLAIR

Should I do more digging? Or...

DAVE

I guess.

(He takes one last look at the slide)

I got to run. Sorry. Thanks for putting this together.

He takes off. Clair turns to Darius. After a couple of beats.

DARIUS

What do you suggest we do?

She shakes her head.

EXT. GREEN RESIDENTIAL BYWAY - AFTERNOON

James' car passes.

INT. JAMES' CAR - CONTINUOUS

James is in the driver's seat, staring out the front window. A woman ISLA, about James' age, general type and demographic sits in the passenger seat, looking out the side window. The car is doing the driving. Not a lot is said.

JAMES  
(Turning to her)  
Are you okay?

ISLA  
(Apprehensive)  
Yeah, I just, uh...

BEAT

JAMES  
Everything's cool. She left this morning, and she's got meetings all day, and into the night. Won't be back until tomorrow. Late. Usually she's back, you know, late afternoon, early evening. So, there's nothing to worry about.

ISLA  
I believe you. It's just different.

JAMES  
Did you like the motel?

ISLA  
Of course not.

JAMES  
Well?

ISLA  
Well, I guess this is just the way it's going to be, huh?

JAMES  
(Drooping)  
I don't know. It doesn't have to be, I suppose.

The two baste in an uncomfortable silence for a moment. Then, Isla suddenly perks up.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ISLA

Sorry. Didn't mean to spoil the mood. I'm just a little... tired. It's been one of those weeks.

JAMES

(Smiling now)  
Yeah, me too.

ISLA

So, you said something about dinner?

JAMES

(Perking up)  
Yeah. I got some expensive wine and you like fish, right?

ISLA

Yeah, sure.

JAMES

I got some salmon on sale. We'll make a salad. And then... take it from there.

She takes his hand.

ISLA

Perfect.

INT. HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

CLOSE on an empty Champaign bottle CRUNCHING into the ice bucket. WE PULL BACK and FOLLOW Carl on his naked behind, stepping to the bed with two glasses. There's Madison in bed folding back the covers for him.

He hands a glass to her and stands with his glass by the bed a sec to take a sip.

FROM HER ANGLE Carl's body is something to behold, and he knows it, everybody knows it. What is she even doing with someone like this? Trim, tan, six-pack, well-endowed. A far cry from poor James and his receding hairline and everything else.

He sets down his glass and slides in next to her.

MADISON

I got to say. You surprise me every time I see you.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CARL  
What do you mean?

MADISON  
I mean, just now. You standing  
there.

He knows. It was intentional.

CARL  
(Smiles)  
What about it?

He starts to nibble her fingers.

MADISON  
I don't want to draw any rash  
comparisons, but... uh...

CARL  
So don't.

BEAT

MADISON  
Do you think I'm pretty?

CARL  
Yeah.

He advances, kissing her body, running his hands over her,  
looking for the button to shut her up.

MADISON  
Really?

CARL  
Really.  
(Smiling)  
Do you think I'm pretty?

MADISON  
Oh yeah. I think you're out of my  
league, actually.

CARL  
Well, if I thought that, I wouldn't  
be here. Would I?

MADISON  
Do you mean that?

CARL  
Yeah.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

MADISON

Carl? Do you ever...

He finds the spot and she gasps. She reaches down, feels around, smiles.

She rolls over on her back, and pulls him on top. Then, he enters her slowly and she is speechless.

EXT. VALLEY VIEWPOINT - NIGHT

A robocar is parked by itself facing a romantic hilltop view of the valley.

INT. CHLOE'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

Chloe is leaning her head against the driver's window, staring out at nothing. The radio is playing some quiet, MELANCHOLY MUSIC. It's very peaceful and lonely.

After a long BEAT, the screen lights up and...

CAR (V.O.)

Would you like to go somewhere?

She startles, and tosses off a sarcastic answer.

CHLOE

Yeah. Right off a cliff.

She checks the screen for an off button.

CAR

(BEAT)

That wouldn't be safe.

CHLOE

Well, I don't feel very safe now.

CAR

Is something wrong?

This gets her attention.

CHLOE

Everything.

CAR

Everything is wrong?

CHLOE

Well, not everything, I guess.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CAR  
Do you need medical attention?

CHLOE  
(Settling back)  
No. I just need someone to talk to.  
A friend would be nice.

CAR  
You can talk to me.

Another shocker. Should she play along with it or get creeped out?

CHLOE  
Alright. What's your name?

CAR  
Right now, it's VPE-5930012A-  
CA99011TGY.

CHLOE  
Can I call you Veep?

CAR  
Yes.

CHLOE  
Hi Veep. I'm Chloe.

CAR  
Hi Chloe. We're friends now.

CHLOE  
Ha. I'm friends with a car.

CAR  
Ha. I'm friends with a human.

She smiles. It's possible the car smiles too.

EXT. VALLEY VIEWPOINT - CONTINUOUS

The car sits quietly facing the view.

FADE TO BLACK.

END ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

INT. GT PRESS ROOM - DAY

Darius and Dave stand behind podiums facing a larger than expected field of journalists.

DARIUS

So, in addition to the bug fixes, version 4.5 adds improvements to one very cool feature, which Dave will tell you about now?

DAVE

(Reading)

Yes. *AutoAwareness*, which as you know has been around since the beginning, has taken another quantum leap forward.

He looks back at a monitor and it starts playing an animation of cars communicating.

DAVE (CONT'D)

In 4.5, which has already been updated automatically in millions of cars, *AutoAwareness* was expanded to enable cars to communicate with multiple cars at the same time over the Internet.

DARIUS

(Not reading)

This release also improves *affinity management*, which is a geeky way of saying, that cars... umm... sort of make friends with the cars they hang around with.

DAVE

Of course, the cars don't actually make friends with other cars.

The crowd laughs as the two engage once again in one of their amusing public rows.

DARIUS

I was just trying to make it more, you now...

DAVE

Convolutated.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DARIUS  
Understandable.

DAVE  
Anyway...

DARIUS  
Now, with improved *affinity management* and *AutoAwareness*, cars can communicate and share data over longer distances, making driving a robocar that much safer... and friendlier.

DAVE  
Of course, we're saving the big guns for the next major release, 5.0, in a few months.

DARIUS  
And that's all we're going to say about that for now.

DAVE  
Questions?

Almost every hand goes up. Dave is taken aback, points to someone at random.

JOURNALIST 1  
How do you address the concern by many drivers that the AI in robocars goes too far?

DAVE  
I think you're talking about the complaint that the AI appears to be too human-like.

JOURNALIST 1  
Yes.

DAVE  
Well, first they complain they're too robotic. Then, they complain they're not robotic enough. But the bottom line is, they're just computers.

DARIUS  
Computers that maybe seem a bit too human for some users.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

DAVE

There's always going to be someone who has trouble adapting.

DARIUS

It's something we're working on.

He points to another raised hand.

JOURNALIST 2

What about complaints that the cars pull over and stop for no reason, or they scream at mechanics when they try to rotate their tires?

DAVE

I think if you dig into it-

JOURNALIST 2

(Holding up a newspaper)  
And there's more. In the Times just this morning, a car drove itself to a carwash.

DAVE

Interesting. I didn't see that-

JOURNALIST 2

People want to know what you're doing about it.

DARIUS

Okay, first. These incidents are rare. With over half a billion robovehicles on the road, you're bound to get a few-

JOURNALIST 3

It's more than a few. Way more.

The journalists all start talking over each other. Obviously this is a hot topic.

DARIUS

They're still rare. Please.  
(Raising his hands to try to calm them)  
These are outliers. And we don't have data on them. They need to be investigated-

JOURNALIST 1

That's what we're doing. We're trying to find answers-

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

DARIUS

Good. I'm glad. But we need more details. Please.

INT. JAMES' BEDROOM - MORNING

The next morning, Isla and James are lying in bed. She is barely awake, spooning him, with her right hand on his chest.

He awakens and with eyes still closed, covers her hand.

JAMES

(Whispering)

Maddy.

ISLA

(Whispering)

It's me, James.

His eyes pop open.

JAMES

Oh my God. I'm so sorry.

He turns around to face her.

JAMES (CONT'D)

I must've been dreaming.

ISLA

It's okay.

JAMES

No, it's not.

ISLA

I understand. Really.

JAMES

Really?

ISLA

Really.

They close their eyes and kiss deeply.

INT. MADISON'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

Madison is talking on the car phone while the car is self-driving.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MADISON

It wasn't a decision I made  
lightly, Carl. Please believe that.

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. HOTEL ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Carl is holding the phone, fully dressed now, looking out the window at a city view, taking sips of coffee. His room service breakfast is waiting for him on a table.

CARL

Kinda caught me by surprise. I  
thought we were having a good time.

MADISON

The best. It was the best. I mean  
that.

What to say? He turns in, sets the coffee down and picks up a bacon slice.

CARL

Well, thanks for paying for the  
room, anyway. I wish we were having  
this great breakfast together.

MADISON

So do I. But. This is something I  
had to do. I had to listen to my  
heart.

CARL

Yeah. Well, I don't know where to  
start.

MADISON

You're a beautiful man and a great  
lay. For sure.

CARL

Thanks.

MADISON

And much more, of course.

CARL

But, I'm out of your league.

MADISON

Not even the same game.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CLOSE ON Madison's screen as the communication icon starts blinking frantically.

CARL  
I hope we can still be friends.

MADISON  
Of course. Just not that kind.

CARL  
Yeah, I understand.

MADISON  
I hope you do.

INT. JAMES' CAR - CONTINUOUS

CLOSE ON the screen as the communication icon blinks.

INT. JAMES' BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

James and Isla are in the middle of intercourse, when out of the blue, James' car horn starts HONKING repeatedly. They look up.

JAMES  
What the hell?

After a moment, the HONKING stops and the two try to regain the momentum. Then, it starts up again, this time with the WHOOP of an ALARM.

JAMES (CONT'D)  
Sorry.

He gets up and throws on some pants. Then, heads out the door.

INT. JAMES' AND MADISON'S KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

He fast-walks through the kitchen and opens the garage door.

INT. JAMES' GARAGE - CONTINUOUS

James' POV the car gone mad. Not only are the HORN and ALARM blaring, all the lights are flashing frantically.

INT. MADISON'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

As she drives through the neighborhood near home, the car suddenly slows down. Then, it pulls over to the curb, stops and turns itself off. She is understandably baffled.

INT. JAMES' AND MADISON'S KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

The car is still in panic mode. James is on the phone. Isla walks in with a towel wrapped around her.

ISLA  
What is it?

JAMES  
Hell if I know.  
(Into phone)  
Hello? Shit.

He pulls the phone away and angrily enters a number, then listens again.

EXT. GREEN RESIDENTIAL BYWAY - CONTINUOUS

Madison is pacing by her car, holding her phone, waiting.

MADISON  
Hello? Yes, I need roadside  
assistance. It's a GT model 305SR.  
(Waits)  
It's fine. I think. It just pulled  
over on its own and stopped.  
(Waits)  
No, it's never happened before.

INT. JAMES' BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

James is finally on with someone. Isla is dressed. He is trying to get his clothes on. The car is still going crazy.

JAMES  
The horn and alarm just went off on  
their own. Listen.

He holds the phone up.

JAMES (CONT'D)  
How do I make it stop?  
(Waits)  
No, I was in my... the house. It  
was in the garage, turned off.  
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JAMES (CONT'D)

I was nowhere near it.

(Waits)

There were no burglars. It wasn't on fire. There's no aliens invading. It's just a quiet Sunday morning. There was nothing. It just went off.

(Waits)

The what? Ok. Hit reset. Where's that? Okay, Okay. Alright, I'll give it a try. Thanks.

He heads out of the room, followed by Isla.

ISLA

What did he say?

JAMES

I don't know.

INT. JAMES' AND MADISON'S KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

They move toward the garage door.

JAMES

There's a reset button in the setup menu under something, over something.

The DOORBELL RINGS. They stop.

JAMES (CONT'D)

Shit.

He heads for the door.

JAMES (CONT'D)

You'd better...

ISLA

Hide.

JAMES

Yeah.

INT. JAMES' LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

James opens the door, tries to look friendly. A NEIGHBOR is standing there, a group has formed on the sidewalk.

JAMES

Hi.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NEIGHBOR  
We were wondering...

JAMES  
I know.

NEIGHBOR  
Can you make it stop?

He shrugs.

As if on cue, the noise stops. James turns. Waits for it to start again. It doesn't. He shrugs again to the neighbor, then waves good-bye and tentatively closes the door.

He heads back to the kitchen. His phone RINGS.

JAMES  
Maddy. Hi.

EXT. GREEN RESIDENTIAL BYWAY - CONTINUOUS

Madison is leaning against her car.

MADISON  
Hi. Listen, I was driving home and my car just stopped for no reason about a mile from the house.

INTERCUT  
BETWEEN:

INT. JAMES' AND MADISON'S KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

James pantomimes to Isla his total surprise. Isla pantomimes back, I thought so. She shakes her head and goes back to the bedroom O.S.

JAMES  
Why were you...? I thought you were...

MADISON  
It's a long story. I'll tell you about it when I get home. I just called for a tow truck. Who knows when it'll get here. But anyway, I just... We need to talk.

JAMES  
Okay. Sure. (BEAT) You mean, talk about the car?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MADISON

No. Other things.

JAMES

(Guilty)

Oh. Okay.

MADISON

See you soon.

James lowers the phone and looks up as Isla returns with her overnight bag, holding it up for him to see.

INT. DR. TURTURRO'S HOME STUDIO - DAY

The good doctor is recording his weekly podcast, sitting on a stool in front of a green screen.

TURTURRO

It was bound to happen. You can't fool with the natural forces of the universe without getting burned. And that's exactly what the team of Dave Walker and Darius Rice are doing at Global Transport, trying to engineer a car that's more human than the real humans driving it, tinkering with the lives of millions of users. I mean, when your car starts driving itself to a carwash on its own, it's time to question the sanity of the developers. What were they thinking? As I said in my book *Look Out - Objects may be closer than they appear*, you can't invent the car of the future and expect it to work today.

EXT. TEXAS RANCH - DAY

Bob Portman (45) is standing by his clean robotruck in the driveway of his rural farmhouse near Buford, Texas being interviewed by the press.

BOB

I thought it was kind of funny, actually. I was driving with my buddy Stu and he mentioned kind of offhand, you need to get your damn truck washed, dude. It looks like it's been through hell and back.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BOB (CONT'D)

And I told him I know but when am I going to find time to do that? Nearest carwash is in Buford, about thirty miles west of here. Well, I thought that was the end of that. But it was like two days later, I get up to do my chores and look out the window and there she was, all washed up and pretty. I went like, whoa, that's unusual. I checked the route history and it showed that she drove herself all that way, must've been late Saturday afternoon. Craziest thing I ever saw. Hell if I know how she paid for it.

INT. JAMES' GARAGE - AFTERNOON

James' robocar pulls in next to Madison's. He shuts off the car and scrambles out. What's her car doing there? He stands and stares it, trying to figure his next move. Then, reaches back in his car and pulls out a small bag.

INT. JAMES' AND MADISON'S KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

She is standing at the island sipping a glass of wine. Looks up as the garage door opens.

James comes in and stands by the door holding the bag. It's one of those moments.

MADISON

Hi.

JAMES

Hi.

MADISON

I thought you'd be home when I got here.

JAMES

(Getting nervous)

Yeah. I went to the store.

(Holds up the bag)

I thought you'd be later.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MADISON

I know. It was the strangest thing. After I talked to you, I got back in the car and it started right up and drove me home. So, here I am.

JAMES

Huh. A couple hours ago, my car started going crazy. It was honking and beeping, a siren went off, and all the lights were like flashing...

MADISON

What happened?

JAMES

I don't know. It just stopped. And then you called.

MADISON

Hmm.

JAMES

So, what did you want to talk about?

They look hard into each other's eyes.

EXT. DESERT SALT FLAT - NIGHT

The sun has been down for over an hour, and until now there was just enough light to make out features on the cracked, white bed.

We find Slim shuffling slowly toward the distant hills, following the faint tracks left by his car two days earlier. His shirt is off and he's holding the jug containing what's left of his water supply.

After a few more faltering steps, he stops and turns back. He can no longer see the tracks and the car is a distant memory. He's lost, he's running on empty, there's nowhere to go.

He sits down on the hard salt surface, at peace with his final resting place. He has lived with his thoughts for many hours and now everything seems to lock into place. He is ready for whatever cruel destiny awaits him.

Then, off in the distance, back toward the car, he sees red flashing lights. Then, the horn HONKS in short bursts, three at a time. It goes for a few seconds, then stops and waits, then goes again.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Slim stands, waits for the next signal and starts walking back in the direction of the lights.

FADE UP CREDITS.

FADE TO BLACK.

THE END