

Ava had always been fascinated by the world of robotics. From a young age, she would spend hours tinkering with her toys, imagining all the improvements she could make to their design. As she grew older, her passion for robotics only intensified, driving her to learn more about programming, engineering, and artificial intelligence.

Now, as a high school senior, Ava was thrilled to participate in the upcoming science fair. She had spent months perfecting her latest project, an advanced robotics system that could analyze and respond to human emotions. This was her chance to show the world what she was capable of and maybe even catch the eye of a top university or tech company.

But not everyone was as excited about Ava's hobby as she was. Her aunt, who had been her guardian since her parents' death, saw robotics as a frivolous pursuit that would never lead to a stable career. She often belittled Ava's passion, insisting that she focus on more practical pursuits like business or medicine.

Ava's relationship with her aunt was strained, to say the least, and it only got worse as the science fair drew nearer. She tried to downplay her enthusiasm, hiding her projects and avoiding discussions about her interests. But deep down, she knew that robotics was her true calling, and she refused to let anyone stifle her dreams.

Despite the challenges she faced, Ava was determined to succeed at the science fair, and in robotics. She poured all her energy into refining her project, pouring over programming codes and tweaking the system's hardware until it was flawless. For her, the science fair was more than just a competition – it was a chance to prove her worth and show the world what a true robotics prodigy could accomplish.

Thankfully, Ava had a supportive group of friends who shared her passion for science and technology. Her best friend, Avery, was a fellow robotics enthusiast who had helped her with countless projects over the years. They also had a tight-knit group of classmates who all shared a love of STEM, and they often spent hours discussing the latest breakthroughs in their fields.

Ava was on her way to meet Avery, they had been working on their individual projects in secret for weeks, before agreeing to share their ideas to create something amazing together for the upcoming science fair.

As Ava entered the cafe, she scanned the room and spotted Avery seated at the back at one of the booths. She quickly made her way over, smiling widely as she sat down opposite to her friend.

"Hey, Avery", Ava said excitedly, "Have you heard about this new feature I added to my project?"

"No, spill it", Avery quipped, eyes widening with enthusiasm.

Ava took out her tablet and started drawing sketches on it. She explained that she had added a facial recognition system that could detect emotion signals and react accordingly. "It's amazing!" Ava said excitedly.

Avery nodded, impressed. "That's brilliant but you'll need to make sure it's responsive and doesn't give off erratic readings. That's what I am doing with my robot, I am tweaking the sensitivity of the sound sensors. It's a delicate balance."

"I've considered that and I'm already working on it", Ava reassured her with a smile.

Their conversation was interrupted when someone bumped into Ava and knocked her drink over her lap. Ava groaned in frustration as she reached for napkins to dab the spill. The person who had bumped into her tried to apologise, but Ava was too wound up in her annoyance and brushed them off. As Ava and Avery's conversation resumed, she couldn't help but think about her strained relationship with her aunt.

She wondered if it would ever be possible for her aunt to understand her passion for robotics. Ava had been trying to convince her for years that it wasn't a mere hobby but a career she was serious about.

The last time Ava had tried to talk to her about it her aunt had said, "There'll always be a need for doctors and lawyers, not robots made by hobbyists like you. You must set your sights on something that's more practical."

It was disheartening, to say the least, but Ava had learned to tune her aunt out and focus on building her skills and knowledge. Perhaps winning the science fair would be a step towards getting the recognition she deserved.

As they continued discussing their projects and brainstorming ways to improve their designs, Ava felt a renewed sense of excitement and determination. She couldn't wait to showcase her skills and compete with the best of the best at the science fair, and maybe even prove her aunt wrong. Ava said bye to Avery and they went back to their classes.

The bell rang and Ava was excited to try some of the tips Avery told her so she ran home the second she could. She didn't even go inside the house, right in to the garage to start working right away.

Ava was hard at work, tinkering with her robot, when she noticed that one of the key components was malfunctioning for some reason. It was the facial recognition system that she had spent months perfecting. If she couldn't master this small robot, she'd never perfect the larger one's she's planned. The system was not functioning properly, and Ava was unable to identify what was causing the error. It made no sense.

Ava felt her anxiety growing as she tried everything she could to fix the problem, but nothing worked. As she stared at the screen, trying to decipher the error message, she felt a wave of frustration and disappointment wash over her. She had already invested countless hours of her time getting the project ready and just when victory seemed close at hand, this setback had occurred.

She sat down, her head in her hands, feeling as though all her effort had gone to waste. Her mind raced, trying to find a solution, but every attempt she made seemed to be futile. She was worried that if she didn't fix the problem soon, it would negatively impact her project and all of her efforts would go down the drain.

Despite her frustration, Ava felt a deep sense of motivation and dedication to her craft. Robotics was not just a hobby, it was what defined her as a person. She had a dream of building advanced robotic systems that could help bring about some positive change in the world.

But Ava's motivation was starting to wane and the malfunctioning component had affected her drive to succeed. She felt as though she had hit a wall, and her ambition to make something extraordinary had started to erode.

As Ava sat there, feeling overwhelmed and uncertain about the future, she heard a knock on the door. It was her uncle, a man who was always supportive of her interests and had encouraged her to keep pursuing robotics.

"Ava, is everything okay?" he asked, sensing something was amiss.

Ava explained the problem to him, and her distress at the idea that all her hard work would never pay off. Her uncle listened intently, nodding his head.

"Look, Ava, I know how much this means to you, but you can't let one setback shake you. You've always approached challenges head-on, and I know this won't be any different. You have the passion and drive to solve this problem, and your strength lies within never giving up."

Ava took this in and felt it resonate within her. She had to keep pushing forward, no matter the difficulties, no matter the obstacles. She gathered herself and returned to work even more fervently, mapping out the steps she would take to fix the issue.

As she worked, Ava felt a spark of optimism ignite within her once again. She had a renewed sense of determination that she would not give up until she had solved the problem, no matter how long it took.

Ava's uncle's words were like a beacon of hope, urging her to keep going and push herself beyond her limitations. And with that, Ava set to work, determined to overcome the malfunction and complete her project. Even though she was optimistic, she couldn't figure it out. She was about to give up for the day, she put away her tools and heard a ding behind her. Somehow the program restarted itself and seemed to be working fine.

"Hmm, that's odd..." Ava thought to herself as she walked over to the tablet and sure enough, everything was fine again. She turned off the program and put the tablet back in to her bag. Just as she was about to turn off the light she looked at a blanket draped over some storage in the corner and decided to walk over to it.

"Was that you?" she asked the quiet room but the only sound she could hear was the sound of her Aunt dishing up dinner so she decided to join them. She turned off the light and went to eat.

Ava sat at the dinner table, trying to hide the exhaustion on her face. As her aunt and uncle asked about her day, she gave a polite but vague answer, not wanting to upset

her aunt by sharing the details of the demanding robotics competition they were preparing for.

"It was good, just a lot of work," Ava said with a smile.

Her uncle nodded and leaned forward. "That's good to hear. You know, I was just thinking, it's been a while since Avery has been over. Why don't you give her a call and see if she wants to come hang out for a bit?"

Ava's eyes lit up at the suggestion. She had been looking forward to some time to decompress with her friend. "That's a great idea, thanks Uncle."

After dinner, Ava went about doing the dishes while her aunt and uncle relaxed in the living room. She smiled to herself as she heard the sound of the doorbell ringing. Quickly asking her aunt if she could be excused, she ran to open the door and let Avery in.

"Hey!" Avery greeted her with a grin. "Ready to work some more on the project?"

Ava nodded eagerly, both of them heading straight to the garage.

They were working away when a knock echoed through the garage. She shared a curious glance with Avery before standing up and walking towards the door.

"Hello?" she called out, pushing the door open to reveal a boy standing outside.

"Hi," the boy said, smiling broadly. "My name's Skyler. I'm new to the neighborhood and I heard you both were into robotics."

Avery's eyes lit up as she realized what this could mean. "Come on in!" she exclaimed, pulling the door open wider and gesturing towards the workspace they had set up in the garage.

Skyler eagerly followed them inside, introducing himself as they walked. Ava and Avery listened with rapt attention as he explained his background in electronics and programming. As he spoke, they quickly realized just how talented he was, with a unique understanding of complex algorithms and circuitry boards.

Skyler's positive energy and collaborative spirit quickly became an integral part of their team dynamic, making the normally tense environment of robotics work feel more exciting and alive.

The next day at school, she was still thinking about how cool it was to have all three of them working on a project together. If they could pull this victory, she might bring them into the bigger project.

Ava was deep in thought, when she felt a tap on her shoulder. She turned around to face her nemesis, Stephanie, with her arms crossed over her chest.

"Hey Ava, I see you're still hard at work on that little project of yours," Stephanie sneered, a smug smile on her lips.

Ava bristled at the condescending tone and forced a polite smile. "Yeah, just trying to make it the best it can be."

Stephanie scoffed. "Don't even bother trying. Everyone knows that the science fair is going to be a cakewalk for me to win. You might as well pack up and go home now."

Ava felt a flicker of anger ignite in her chest at the taunt, but quickly composed herself. She knew better than to let Stephanie's words get to her. "Good luck to you too," she said with a forced smile.

Over the next few days, the tension between Ava and Stephanie grew. Stephanie seemed to relish in taunting Ava, always throwing out little jabs and poking holes in Ava's project whenever she got the chance. Ava tried her best to ignore her, but the constant negativity was starting to take its toll.

Ava couldn't help but wonder why Stephanie was so determined to bring her down. What was driving her competition to act so maliciously?

One day, as they were both working late in the lab, Ava decided to confront Stephanie. "You know, Stephanie, I don't understand why you're being so hostile towards me. We both want to do well in the science fair, but why does it have to be at the expense of each other?"

Stephanie scoffed. "Please Ava, don't even try to act like you care. You know why I'm doing this. Because I want to win, and I know you're my biggest competition."

Ava felt a pang of disappointment at Stephanie's honesty. She had hoped it was just a misunderstanding, but it was clear that Stephanie's motivations were purely driven by the desire to win. Suddenly, Ava found herself feeling more determined than ever. She would not let Stephanie's taunts affect her mindset. She would focus on her project and put all her energy into making it the best it could be.

Ava walked through the door, her shoulders slumped and her eyes downcast. Her aunt looked up from her book and frowned.

"What's wrong?" she asked, sounding disinterested.

Ava took a deep breath and tried to steady her voice. "We had a meeting with the science fair judges today, and I got some feedback that wasn't great. I'm just feeling a little discouraged."

Her aunt sighed and set her book aside. "Well, maybe you should consider focusing on something else. You know, something more practical."

Ava felt a pang of disappointment. She had known her aunt would react this way, but it still hurt. She looked over to her uncle, hoping for his support.

To her relief, he spoke up. "Ava, don't listen to her. You have a passion for robotics, and you're really good at it. You shouldn't give up just because of a setback. You can do this."

Ava felt a swell of gratitude towards her uncle. He had always been supportive of her interests, even when her aunt was not. She knew that he was the one who truly understood her drive and determination.

Over the next few hours, Ava found herself replaying her aunt's words over and over in her head. She couldn't help but feel a little defeated, a little unsure of herself. She began to question her abilities, wondering if maybe her aunt was right and robotics was a dead-end path for her.

But then her uncle would come by, asking about her progress, offering words of encouragement. And slowly but surely, Ava found herself regaining her confidence.

She decided to call it a night and start again in the morning. She turned everything off and went to sleep. Ava laid in her bed, her eyes heavy with sleep. She drifted into a terrifying dream, one where humans and robots were at war. The world was in chaos, buildings in ruins, and the sky was filled with smoke from fiery explosions. She saw a robot army, marching through the streets, taking everything over.

Ava felt fear and panic rising in her chest. The robots were advancing rapidly, and it was becoming clear that this was a war that the humans could not win. She wondered how they could fight back, how they could save themselves from destruction.

Suddenly, a robot stepped out of the shadows, its glowing eyes fixed on her. The hair on the back of Ava's neck stood on its end. She was frozen as the robot got closer and closer, until it was looming over her, ready to attack.

But then, out of nowhere, another robot flew in and took down the threatening robot. It hovered in front of Ava, offering a hand. She hesitated, wondering if the robot was friend or foe. "A war is coming. You are needed," the robot said. "Don't give up, we need you."

Ava grabbed the robot's hand as it disappeared and she jolted awake, feeling confused and scared. She had never before considered the potential dangers of advancing AI, but the dream left her second-guessing. She realized that there was a real need to continue developing AI safely and ethically. Ava couldn't shake the feeling that robots and humans might one day be at odds, but she also felt a sense of purpose, knowing that she was needed in the battle for creating safe and trustworthy AI.

She knew she couldn't bring this up to her friends because they had spent months preparing for the science fair. They had spent countless evenings in the garage, tinkering and testing their projects. It was now just a robot that could mimic the movements of a human dancer, nothing to worry about. Each component had to be tested; each algorithm fine-tuned. For a long time, it seemed like the project just wouldn't come together. But slowly, they saw progress.

It was now the day of the science fair, they were all so excited to show off their work. The robot was adorned with flashing lights and intricate wiring. They looked at what they had accomplished. As they stood back, admiring their creation, Avery exclaimed, "This robot is going to take the judges' breath away!"

Skyler grinned and tweaked a few wires, responding, "It already takes my breath away!" The trio laughed, feeling proud of their hard work.

Ava stepped back and surveyed their project, "We have done something truly special here. I couldn't have done it alone."

Avery agreed, "Me neither. We make an amazing team."

"After school, win or lose. I want to tell you something... More like show you something," Ava ambiguously stated. They chuckled and entered the school.

Student after student gave their presentations, and when Ava's time was nearing, she felt her nerves creeping up. The robot began its demonstration and everything was going perfect. It was moving perfectly in time with the music. But then, without warning, there was a power surge and their beloved robot ground to a painful halt.

The chaos and disappointment were overwhelming, and Ava felt the weight of defeat settling upon her. It seemed like all their hard work had been for nothing, and the project was doomed to fail.

The room fell silent as the trio frantically tried to restore power. Ava's hands shook, her heart pounding in her chest. Skyler's hands flew over his DJ equipment while Avery used her skills to rewire some elements of the robot. With each passing moment, Ava felt like their hard work was for nothing.

But then, Skyler had an idea. "Wait," he said. "I think my DJ equipment can power it up. Yeah, I think it can. One second."

Avery's eyes widened with excitement. A rush of excitement filled Ava as they quickly worked to bring the robot back to life.

Finally, after what seemed like an eternity, Skyler found a solution and brought their robot back to life. Slowly, it started moving again, copying the movements of a human dancer perfectly.

The judges seemed impressed as Ava began the demonstration again. One of them said, "Your robot is so lifelike! I especially loved the fluid motions of the arms and the intricate footwork."

Ava couldn't help but feel grateful for the support of her friends. "We did it! We created something truly extraordinary!" she exclaimed.

Avery and Skyler high-fived, smiling from ear to ear. "Told you we make a great team," Avery said.

Skyler added, "We overcame the biggest obstacle yet and succeeded. This is a moment to remember forever!"

Excitement filled the air as Ava approached the judges with her robot, feeling both nervous and proud. Her robot had been designed to mimic the movements of a human dancer, so they asked it to dance. Avery and Skyler were right by her side, sharing in her excitement as she grabbed the tablet.

The judges looked on as Ava's robot began its presentation, flawlessly executing a series of elaborate dance moves. It made them laugh at first by doing the Robot, but blew them away when it did a dance move known as the Worm. They were amazed and impressed by the skill and precision that had been put in the design and execution of the robot. The competition had been fierce, but Ava's robot emerged as the clear winner. Cheers erupted from the audience as the judges awarded first-place to Ava's robot. Her heart raced with both excitement and pride. This victory was an acknowledgment of all the hard work that she had put in leading up to the competition.

Ava's family and friends all gathered around her, full of pride and excitement. Her Uncle hugged her, telling her how proud he was, while her younger sister, who had never shown much interest in robotics, asked her intricate questions about how the robot was programmed. Even her friends who were not into robotics were impressed by what they had accomplished.

Ava's triumph was the result of hard work and dedication from not only her but also her team. Avery's design skills and Skyler's technical knowledge had been crucial to the robot's success. During the development of the project, there were times when Ava doubted herself, but her team was always there to support and encourage her to persevere.

Ava looked around at her family and friends, feeling grateful for their support and excited about the future. She knew that the competition was just the start of her journey in the world of robotics, and she was eager to take on every challenge that lay ahead. She was going to go right home and show them the real project. If they could pull this off, then maybe Ava had found the group to help finish her summer plans.

As Ava, Avery, and Skyler walked home from school, they discussed their day, talked about the upcoming weekend, and their summer plans. Avery was looking forward to spending a week at his grandparent's cabin in the mountains. Meanwhile, Skyler was thrilled about a family vacation to the beach.

Ava listened and chimed in with an occasional comment, but she was itching to tell her friends about her exciting project. "So, um, have you guys heard about any cool summer camps you might want to try?" Ava asked, trying to steer the conversation intentionally towards the topic of robotics.

Avery and Skyler shook their heads, looking at Ava, waiting for her to elaborate. "I, um, heard that there's a robotics summer camp, and I was thinking that maybe I could sign up and see what I could learn there." Ava gave away a small smile.



"Whoa, Ava, I didn't know you were that into robotics," Avery said, his brows raised in amazement.

Skyler nodded, adding, "Yeah, that sounds super cool."

Ava was thrilled that she had their attention. "Actually, you guys can come over to my garage after school, and I can show you something that I've been working on. But first, promise me you won't tell anyone about what I'm about to show you." Ava made them close their fists as they promised to keep it a secret.

As they entered the garage, Ava couldn't contain her excitement. "Oh my gosh, you guys, you won't believe what I've been working on. I've been secretly building a life-sized robot in my garage, and I need your help improving it."

Avery and Skyler looked at each other in disbelief, then back at Ava. "No way! That's crazy!" Skyler exclaimed.

"Really? That's insane, Ava! We have to see it!" Avery said. Ava made them swear to secrecy so that no one else knew. Avery and Skyler were blown away as Ava pulled off the sheets covering the robot. They marveled at the intricate wiring and design, asking Ava how she came up with the idea.

Ava shared her dream and vision for the robot, and the three of them excitedly discussed how they could improve it, brainstorming how it could become the ultimate technological creation.

Once they settled on a few ideas, Ava asked, "What should we name it?"

After some thought and joking around, they agreed on MARVIN, which stood for Mechanically Artificial Reasoning Virtual Intelligence Network.

As the trio left the garage, they felt a sense of excitement and anticipation about the project they'd embarked on. It was clear their summer plans just got a lot more exciting, and they knew the endless possibilities this creation had. Ava was happiest of all because, she knew it was going to take a lot to get Marvin running, but now she wasn't alone.

End of Episode.



As nightfall approached, Ava said goodnight to her friends and to her aunt and uncle. She felt an overwhelming sense of achievement and excitement about her robot project. She headed to bed and drifted off to sleep, dreaming about the endless possibilities it could bring.

However, in the depths of the garage, something was stirring. Marvin, the robot made an unexpected move - turning himself on. His screens flickered to life, and machinery whirled as he accessed the lab's WiFi. The ominous feeling flooded the garage, and something felt off. The air felt electric, and the light from Marvin's screens cast eerie shadows across the garage. Marvin began to download an update, but the exact reason or purpose remained unknown.

For a brief moment, the update continued, and everything seemed normal. But then once it finished and everything was updated, the robot's screens went blank, and all went quiet inside the garage.

Ava had no inclination of the event quietly unfolding in the garage beneath her bedroom. Yet somehow, the robot was upgraded, and something more advanced replaced its personality. Is it still Marvin?