# Singularity

Drones were never this much of a problem in my dad’s day. That’s what he used to say, at least until a wild roomba took his legs off. That was at the start of all this. If he wasn’t victim number one, he was up there. Dad was an engineer who worked at NYLE, and a fine one at that. To this day his work on the hachis take the lives of hundreds everyday. It wasn’t just the hachis, though. Plenty of droids got the bug. Warehouse shippers, delivery drones, roombas. Hachis only compounded the problem.

I heard a gunshot echo through the warehouse. It was probably just Sam taking out another Delivr, trademark NYLE. I decided I should stop typing at my desk and go check out what it brought us this time. When I stood up I noticed Braden was sleeping on some crates. Hopeless. Maybe I’ll talk to Rogue about reprimanding him later. By the time I got to Sam he was already sifting through the package. I went straight for the drone’s bullet wound to see if I could pry it open. I didn’t really care for whatever was in the package, even if it was food. I didn’t eat much anyway. Braden was likely to snatch it all up anyway.

My dad showed me how to take apart a Delivr when he was still alive. He brought one home one day just to show me. He plopped a model CZ on the table, shining with its fresh chrome shielding. “It looks like a big pirahnna. If pirahnna had propeller blades,” I observed. He chuckled and pulled out Ellie, his trusty wrench.

“Now you see these bolts. Erin, are you paying attention? Look at these black bolts here,” he said pointing at the belly, “Notice they have a little red marker on them. You can’t undo these. Don’t even try, it’ll just end terribly.”

“Okay?”

“But look here at this one. This one’s marked blue. They don’t come this way, I marked it for you. Here, take Ellie and undo this bolt. Yeah, like that. Now you can just pull away the UV filter on his eyes and, boom!” he said. I pulled the pirahnna’s visor away and it had two little cameras for eyes and a USB port for a nose. How cute.

The guy Sam shot out of the sky didn’t seem to have the same charm. Fortunately Sam hit the propeller shaft on the mark and the body wasn’t damaged. The propellers were the problem on the Delivrs, that and the weight of the body could do some damage, even for such a light droid. I pulled out Ellie and removed the right bolt. I popped the visor off and shoved the detox stick in its nose port, just in case. Took a few tries to get the right orientation for the stick, but it went in eventually. Now to wait until the detox finished.

I sat back on a boulder and watched Sam. It looked like he was nearly done, but it also looked like he was trying to ply something open with his knife. “You okay over there?” I asked, though I knew engaging him in conversation may have dire consequences, especially with his knife out.

“Shouldn’t you be hacking something right now, hero?” he scoffed.

“Hacking takes time, I’ll have you know.”

“So does scavenging. Y’know, something that will actually keep us alive out here.”

“You’re a peach. What’d you find?”

“Jerkey, canned pears, and a packet of tissues.”

“And?”

“Why don’t you go look for yourself?” he struggled with some kind of metal box, “I’m sure you’ll find some reason to take it.” He finally popped the lid off the box. Empty. “Worthless piece of shit,” he cursed, tossing the bits aside. The parts landed in his junk pile, right next to a pack of chalk and a bicycle chain.“These bots just get stupider and stupider. Your pops thought somebody would need all of this all at once?” he asked me.

“He always told me support vector machines work in mysterious ways. Ooh, it looks like detox is finishing. Great talking to you, Sammy, but I gotta go,” I said. He sneered. I scurried over to the droid and swiped the detox stick out of its nose. Just then it powered off, and I could here the whirring of its fan fade slowly into silence. The Delivr was dead.