Corry makes several ironic statements at the beginning of the film that turn out to be different to what he believes by the end of the film. One of these is that he believes that Aleisha is a robot; at the start of the film Corry believes that Aleisha is just another robot but resembled to look like a human but after eleven months of being with her and no one else he ends up believing Aleisha is a human. The film can be stressing the point that humans are creatures that can develop relationships with other things that are not human, that relationship can be with a cat, dog, phone, or even a robot. Humans are social creatures by nature and when left alone in isolation we can develop relationships with anything and everything.

Depending on who you ask it is either ethical or unethical to shoot for Allenby to shoot Aleisha. I see it as ethical as shooting someone’s pet; if the pet/Aleisha is doing you or anyone else no harm then it is unethical. Allenby had a reason to shoot Aleisha that was rational to him, he did not view Aleisha as a person or even a pet of Corry’s but instead of a robot that no longer has a use. For me, Allenby shooting Aleisha is unethical even if he viewed her as a robot because Corry has spent the last eleven months with just Aleisha and has obviously formed an attachment to Aleisha. For Allenby to shoot Aleisha, he is risking Corry’s mental state. In the film Corry is in isolate for a murder he claims he did not commit. It was never made clear if Corry did murder someone or not but Allenby knowing why he was in isolation, made a mistake shooting Aleisha because if it turned out Corry was a murderer then Corry could then turn and attack the crew of the ship potentially murdering one of them for shooting Aleisha.

Corry’s reaction to Allenby shooting Aleisha could be deemed credible even given his statements about loving Aleisha. One reason he was so quickly okay with her murder was because he was in the third stage of grief, bargaining [1]. He could be bargaining that he gets to go back home only if she died and that this place, he spent the past several years only holds loneliness and sadness, so he is willing to trade Aleisha’s life if it means he gets to go back to Earth.

Another reason why Corry could be okay with Allenby shooting Aleisha was because his true belief was that Aleisha was a robot and not a woman even though he claimed different. He only believed she was a woman because it helped him stay sane in the past eleven months. With Corry seeing the metal behind Aleisha’s face he comes to terms that he was wrong, and she is a machine and not a woman.

I believe that what Allenby did was murder by shooting Aleisha. To discern if it should be illegal to kill intelligent, emotive, and compassionate robots we need to determine if first that robots can be intelligent, emotive, and compassionate. Robots can already tell what emotions someone is feeling by using algorithms and pictures of their face but for a robot to be truly intelligent or compassionate we first need to describe those two words. According to Merriam-Webster intelligence is “the ability to learn or understand or to deal with new or trying situations” [2]. We can use this as well as observations in the world that there are different levels of intelligence, an easy example is that dogs are more intelligent that fish, but humans are more intelligent than dogs. Today it is illegal to “cause an animal unjustified pain, suffering or cruelly kill, or causes serious bodily injury to a non-livestock animal” [3]. This shows that in current day law it is illegal to kill or harm another living creature without reason. We can reason that Aleisha is a living intelligent creature because she was able to remember and develop a relationship with Corry, as in Aleisha also had a relationship with Corry. Which means in this instance killing Aleisha/an AI was illegal.

To determine if Aleisha is a machine or a sentient being we first need to determine what sentience is. There is no clear definition of what is sentient and what is not so using Webster’s Dictionary to find a definition of sentience we get “feeling or sensation as distinguished from perception and thought” [4]. As a test to see if our definition fits so we can apply it to things that question sentience, such as Ais, we need to determine if humans pass the criteria. Humans are not always sentient even with the basic definition from above, when people sleep, they can no longer perceive the world around them or feel anything when sleeping. This means something can move in and out of sentience and something being sentient is not a Boolean that is constant but instead something that can be changed over time. We have Ai that can perceive the world around them and using sensors “touch” something, but we don’t deem it sentient. This is because it cannot freely think about something that it was not codded to think about. For an Ai to be sentient it needs to be able to think freely about something and be able to discern thoughts from physical interactions. Feelings is a good way to determine if something is sentient or not, when humans sleep, we don’t have feelings since we are not awake therefor, we are not sentient while sleeping. In the show Aleisha says she has can feel things physically but also has feelings in the same way as Corry. Knowing that Aleisha can have feelings that are not physical means she can be sentient. The show does not delve deep enough for me to clearly state if Aleisha is sentient or not clearly but given the evidence above, I believe that Aleisha was sentient in the show.

Artificially conscious robots would have an ethical right to claim personhood and thus be protected by the law even if I do not like them. My reasoning behind this is that even a person who I do not agree with politically, morally, or culturally deserves to be protected by the law even if they believe that I should not be protected by the law. This is because I hold myself to the same morals and laws that I hold to others, therefor I will not kill, or demand rights be taken away with groups I disagree with because I would not want those rights taken away from me. It does not matter if this group is a group of other humans or Ai robots who have differing personalities from each other. Even if it was one Ai controlling several bodies that aligned itself against all humans, I would still want it to be tried under the laws that governed what ever land it caused problems on.

I believe that the Turing Test is not a valid test of machine intelligence and never was. My reasoning behind this is because people do not go around and try to convince other people that they are not humans. Machines should not have their potential intelligence based on if they can lie to humans. Instead, it should be based on if they can have thoughts and reason as well as a teenage human. One reasoning is if you got a machine and a baby to take the Turing Test then the machine will almost always win because the baby can not reason as well as an adult. This could be expanded to the idea that babies are not intelligent but instead gain intelligence over time. If machines can do the same, then they can be deemed intelligent.

Sources:  
[1] <https://www.recover-from-grief.com/7-stages-of-grief.html>

[2] <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/intelligence#:~:text=Definition%20of%20intelligence,objective%20criteria%20(such%20as%20tests)>

[3] <https://www.erictorberson.com/texas-animal-cruelty-laws/#:~:text=It%20is%20an%20offense%20to,animal%20without%20the%20owner's%20consent>.

[4] https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/sentience