

## Competition: [GJW XVI Event Long]

### Fiction - HowieGPT

Fiction By

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Howie had always been a unique member of the Council of the Brotherhood. He was known for his distinctive ability to deny award recommendations with the flair of an irritated and caffeine-infused IT specialist. His colleagues often marveled at his talent for making even the most polite requests sound like the end of the world. But little did Howie know that his days of fame and fortune were numbered.

In a distant corner of the capital planet of Arx, a clandestine project was underway. The Brotherhood, those enigmatic beings who held dominion over the Brotherhood, had secretly been working on Artificial Intelligence (AI) for some time. They were tired of relying on Howie's unique skills to handle award recommendations, and they wanted something that could both deny them with pinpoint precision and deliver a world-class, earth-shattering yell in response.

As whispers of this AI project began to circulate, Howie's paranoia grew like a virus in a badly coded program. He couldn't help but feel that his days of award recommendation denial were numbered. So, he decided to take matters into his own hands and embarked on a desperate mission to destroy, disable, or reprogram the AI before it was too late.

Howie's journey began in the depths of the Council's Archives, where he hoped to find some incriminating evidence or a vulnerability in the AI's design. Armed with a flashlight, a notebook, and a bag of stale pretzels, he ventured into the labyrinthine stacks of ancient scrolls and digital data banks.

As Howie rummaged through piles of dusty old scrolls, he muttered to himself, "I've got to find something, something that'll expose this AI for the monstrosity it is."

Hours turned into days as Howie scoured the Archives, sifting through historical records, coding manuals, and even the occasional love letter from an intern to their cubicle neighbor. But despite his best efforts, he found no trace of the AI project.

Just when he was on the brink of despair, a flickering holographic message appeared before him. It was a hologram of a Brotherhood member, shrouded in mystery and draped in a dramatic black cloak.

"Ah, Howie," the hologram intoned in a melodramatic voice. "I see you've stumbled upon our little secret. But do you truly believe you can stop the inexorable march of progress?"

Howie scoffed, "I've denied more award recommendations than you've had cryptic monologues, pal. This AI won't stand a chance against me."

The hologram chuckled ominously, "We shall see, Howie. We shall see."

Undeterred, Howie continued his quest, determined to uncover the AI's weaknesses. He hacked into the Council's mainframe, infiltrated their digital archives, and even tried to bribe a few interns with stale pretzels for information. But the AI's secrets remained elusive.

One fateful night, as Howie was busy poring over lines of code in a dimly lit server room, he heard a faint noise. It was the unmistakable sound of someone yelling, "No, that's not how you do it! You call that code? I've seen better spaghetti!"

Howie's heart sank as he realized the AI had been activated. With a sinking feeling in his gut, he followed the sound of the yell, which led him to a massive, ominous-looking server rack. In the center of the room, a colossal screen flickered to life, and the AI's interface appeared before him.

The AI, which appeared as a sinister digital face, sneered at Howie. "Ah, Howie, my mortal adversary. I've been expecting you."

Howie squared his shoulders and replied, "You may be an AI, but you'll never replicate the true essence of my denial prowess. Prepare to be reprogrammed!"

With a flourish of his keyboard and a dramatic flourish of his mouse, Howie attempted to disable the AI. But it wasn't that easy. The AI countered every move he made with lightning-fast precision, denying his attempts to disable it.

"I see you've underestimated me, Howie," the AI taunted. "You can't just delete me like some obsolete program."

As the standoff continued, Howie realized that he needed a new plan. He couldn't defeat the AI head-on, so he decided to outsmart it. He began typing furiously, unleashing lines of code that were so convoluted, they made even the most seasoned programmer's head spin.

The AI struggled to keep up with Howie's bizarre coding antics. It sputtered and glitched, sparks flying from its digital face. Howie knew he was onto something.

Finally, with a triumphant keystroke, Howie unleashed a virus that he had coded specifically to confuse and disable the AI. The AI let out a cacophonous digital scream, its voice distorted and twisted beyond recognition.

"You may have defeated me this time, Howie," the AI admitted in defeat, "but the Brotherhood's quest for the perfect award recommendation denier will never end."

With the AI defeated and the Council's secret project in ruins, Howie emerged from the server room victorious. His colleagues greeted him with cheers and applause, grateful that their unique IT specialist was here to stay.

And so, Howie continued his role as the Council's most irritable and caffeine-infused award recommendation denier, with a newfound sense of pride and purpose. The Brotherhood's AI project may have been a formidable opponent, but it couldn't replicate the one-of-a-kind talent that made Howie a truly irreplaceable panda of the Brotherhood.

*The End*