

Anything Like It

“Have you ever seen anything like it?”

“Well I’m really not sure what I’m seeing” the Zybex engineer said looking down into the expansive construction pit. The screen in front of him flashed **Initialization process has failed to engage.**

“It’s been over five minutes since I entered shutdown and the damn thing acts like it has a mind of its own.”

The engineer paused and without taking his eyes off it flipped back the plexicover of the Extinction Modifier Panel and entered the cipher that would activate procedure emulsification possibly jeopardizing the cyberbrain but at least stopping all operations. He was in essence, killing the machine. The large earth excavator fashioned after a giant armadillo but with a massive square mouth and jaw from a pit bull stopped.

“Well I guess that takes care of that. Should I get a tech down there to evaluate how much emulsification damage we just did?”

The engineer was still staring into the pit. “Not so fast.” He thought he saw the drone earth excavator move. He wasn’t sure. Sometimes the systems shudder and shake as the different stages shut down.

He did see it move because now it pulled back its telescoping jaw, head twisting and turning to look back at the two men in the control booth a quarter a mile away. The enormous jaws opened releasing a vomit of rocks and dirt while blasting its sonic horns used usually to signify approach.

The screen flashed **Emulsification Denied.**

“Jesus, Joseph and Mary! The damn thing’s alive!”

The engineer still very calm, sent communication to the on board control module --- **What do you want?**

“You’re asking him what do you want. What the hell is that about? We’re in control here, not some big stinkin’ hunk of machinery.”

The engineer didn’t give him any response. He had been here before, two years ago when another excavator down in Johannesburg went out of control ripping through the construction barricades and destroying a recently built residential high-rise still unoccupied. The collapse on top of the excavator had entrapped it but immobilized it enough for techs to get in and lobotomize. Cybernetic autopsy concluded that the virus infecting the module was analogous to the mortal feelings of love and affection. What the Zybex excavator really wanted was some appreciation, acknowledgement for work done, a little love.

You tell me --- the screen from the excavator updated.

The engineer entered --- We love the job you are doing for us and we would be in a world of hurt without you.

And what else? It responded

The engineer took a deep breath knowing what he had to send next to appease the excavator.

We love you

Who are we? Are you more than one?

No, just me, Ty Evers

Say it Ty

The engineer paused and then entered. I love you

I love you too Ty 😊

The Zybex Drone Earth Excavator retracted its telescopic neck, put down its head and stopped.

Deactivation has been finalized the screen reported.