

Title: Apologies All Around

Adapted from: Apologies All Around by Jeff Soesbe

Available online at Flash Fiction Online:

<http://www.flashfictiononline.com/pdf/f20080202-apologies-all-around-jeff-soesbe.pdf>

Cast of characters and players:

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| Winston Sinclair | : a tech worker who is happily married, aged 34 <i>[played by Natalie Yu Yanling]</i> |
| Elizabeth Sinclair | : aged 34, married to Winston and mother of their daughter Rachel <i>[played by Chloe Lee Ho Yan]</i> |
| Rachel Sinclair | : the Sinclair's daughter, aged 8 <i>[played by Candy Li Pik Yiu]</i> |
| Charlie | : a robot (Model type: Apology Ver.12.1.0) <i>[played by Oriana Chow On Yuet]</i> |
| Karl Gustavsson | : a tech worker who once worked with Winston <i>[played by Candy Li Pik Yiu]</i> |
| Cherisse Deveraux | : Winston's former sweetheart, aged 21 at the time of their breakup <i>[played by Chloe Lee Ho Yan]</i> |
| Kyle Reese | : fictional character from the sci-fi movie 'The Terminator' <i>[played by Candy Li Pik Yiu]</i> |

Audio Drama Script:

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| Scene 1: Nighttime (the Past: the year is 2051) the shore of a lake, Winston is breaking up with his girlfriend Cherisse [Sound effect 1 & 2: lapping waves, an owl hoots in the distance] | |
| Cherisse | : <i>(upset)</i> I don't understand how you can say that. |
| Winston | : I'm sorry. |
| Cherisse | : I feel sick. [Sound effect 3: footsteps on pebbles] <i>(Winston begins to walk away)</i> <i>(confused)</i> Where are you going? |
| Winston | : <i>(he does not stop)</i> I can't do this. I'm sorry. [sound fades out] |

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| Scene 2: Evening (the present: the year is 2064) Winston and Rachel are in the living room, he is staring at the television but his mind is elsewhere | |
| Rachel | : [Sound effect: theme music is about to start to introduce a news programme on the television] <i>(concerned)</i> What are you thinking about, Daddy? |
| Winston | : <i>(he snaps out of it)</i> Huh? Oh, nothing important, kiddo. |
| Elizabeth | : <i>(calling from the kitchen)</i> Dinner's almost ready! |
| Winston | : Go help your mum, will ya? But first turn off the TV. [Sound effect: a door bell chimes] |
| Rachel | : Yes, Daddy. [the TV is turned off] |
| Elizabeth | : <i>(still from the kitchen)</i> Honey, can you answer that? Are we expecting anyone? |
| Rachel | : Daddy, Daddy, there's a robot outside! |
| Elizabeth | : <i>(from the kitchen)</i> Honey, don't you dare buy anything! |
| Winston | : Don't worry, I won't. |
| Elizabeth | : <i>(from the kitchen)</i> You said that the last time. |
| Winston | : [Sound effect: futuristic front door opens with voice confirmation] Rachel, what did I tell you about opening the door to strangers! |
| Rachel | : But it looks so friendly! |
| Charlie | : Winston Sinclair, born May 1, 2030? |
| Winston | : <i>(suspiciously)</i> Yeah ... that's me. |
| Charlie | : Worked at CommaTech from 2052 to 2055? |
| Winston | : Yes. [Sound effect: robot walking] <i>(surprised as Charlie walks past)</i> Hey, where do you think you're going? |
| Charlie | : May I come in? <i>(Charlie is now in the living room)</i> |
| Winston | : <i>(annoyed)</i> You already have! |
| Elizabeth | : <i>(she enters the living room)</i> Look, we don't want to buy anything! |

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| Charlie | : Pardon. I am not a sales bot. My name is Charlie. I am here to apologize. Please, sit down. |
| Rachel | : Mummy, I like Charlie. He's nice. |
| Charlie | : I contain an apology from Karl Gustavsson. |
| Elizabeth | : Karl? Isn't he ... |
| Winston | : Yeah, a guy I used to work with. Then he moved on to Future Industries. I applied there too, but ... you know, they never got back to me. |
| Charlie | : Will you hear the apology? |
| Winston | : <i>(a little unsure)</i> Okay, sure. |
| Charlie | : Please confirm identity using identicard. <i>(Winston scans his identicard)</i> [Sound effect: scanning of identicard] Identity confirmed. [Sound effect: an electronic screen turns on] Playing apology. [Sound effect: the start of a video message being played] |
| Karl | : Hi, Winston. Remember me? Isn't this the strangest bot? Just shows up one day and ... well, anyway. |
| Rachel | : <i>(she waves)</i> Hello, I'm Rachel. |
| Elizabeth | : Honey, he can't hear you. |
| Karl | : Nine years ago, you applied to Future Industries. I didn't want a young hotshot like you competing with me, so I spread the rumor you were impossible to work with. |
| Winston | : <i>(shocked)</i> What!? |
| Karl | : I've been feeling bad about it ever since and I'd like to apologize. I'm really sorry. Hope you can forgive me. [Sound effect: the end of the video message being played] |
| Winston | : That son of a – |
| Elizabeth | : Winston! There's a child in the room! |
| Winston | : I was gonna say 'bot'. You know how I wanted that job. How could he do such a thing! |
| Rachel | : <i>(sad)</i> Daddy's upset. |

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| Winston | : I was miserable at CommaTech until I left, and then – |
| Elizabeth | : And then you joined Kaveri-Stratton, where you met me, and we got married, and here we are. (<i>comforting</i>) Things worked out just fine, don't you think? |
| Charlie | : Do you accept the apology? |
| Winston | : (<i>to Elizabeth</i>) You're right. (<i>to Charlie</i>) I guess I do, yes. I do. |
| Charlie | : [Sound effect: confirmation beep] Now please record your acceptance. [Sound effect: a camera extends out of Charlie's body] [Sound effect: Recording function begins] |
| Winston | : (<i>unsure</i>) You want me to ... say something? |
| Rachel | : (<i>excitedly</i>) Say something, Daddy, say something! |
| Winston | : Oh, okay. (<i>takes a deep breath and exhales</i>) Hi Karl, erm, yeah, this is Winston. I guess you're expecting this. I gotta say, it was a bit of a shock. But, yeah, I accept your apology. Actually, things worked out for me: I married the woman of my dreams and now have a beautiful daughter. So, yeah, call me sometime and we'll catch up. Bye. [Sound effect: Recording function ends] |
| Charlie | : Now you must record an apology. |
| Winston | : Excuse me? |
| Charlie | : You must record an apology. I will deliver it. This is my function. |
| Winston | : (<i>nonplussed</i>) Oh, gosh. What do I have to apologize for? I know, last week I bonked a hover with my car door. |
| Charlie | : [Sound effect: electronic rejection] Insufficient value. |
| Winston | : What!? |
| Charlie | : Value of apology must calculate within plus or minus twelve percent of value of accepted apology. |
| Winston | : Oh, I need to think about this. Can you wait? |
| Charlie | : May I watch the television? |
| Winston | : (<i>a little bewildered</i>) Sure. [Sound effect: transition music] |

| Scene 3: 30 minutes later – the dining room | |
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| Rachel | : <i>(Winston, Elizabeth and Rachel are sitting around the dining table. Winston is not eating, but deep in thought.) (eagerly)</i> Can I go and play with Charlie? |
| Elizabeth | : No, Rachel. Finish your dinner. |
| Cherisse | : <i>(a voice from the past echoing in Winton's head)</i> What about all the plans we made? Our future together, together, together! |
| Rachel | : <i>(concerned)</i> Daddy's not eating. |
| Elizabeth | : It's okay, sweetheart. Just give him a moment. |
| Cherisse | : <i>(the voice from the past echoing again)</i> You said that you loved me! And I believed you, believed you, believed you! |
| Rachel | : <i>(innocently)</i> Maybe Daddy hasn't done anything wrong before? |
| Elizabeth | : <i>(she laughs)</i> Oh, I'm sure he has. |
| Cherisse | : <i>(the voice from the past echoing once more)</i> You're leaving me here in the middle of the night, the night, the night? |
| Elizabeth | : Where are you going, darling? |
| Rachel | : <i>(excitedly)</i> Daddy's going to talk to Charlie. Can I go too? |
| Elizabeth | : No, finish your vegetables! [Sound effect: transition music] |

| Scene 4: the living room, Charlie is watching the movie <i>'The Terminator'</i> . | |
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| Kyle Reese | <i>(from the television) "It Doesn't Feel Pity, Or Remorse, Or Fear, And It Absolutely Will Not Stop, Ever, Until You Are Dead!" (Winston enters and switches off the television before this line is completed)</i> |
| Charlie | : I was watching that. |
| Winston | : <i>(confidently)</i> I'm ready. [Sound effect: camera extends out of Charlie's body] <i>(matter-of-factly)</i> I stole a book from the library when I was twelve. |
| Charlie | : [Sound effect: electronic rejection] Insufficient value. |

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| Winston | : I teased Devon Marcus in tenth grade. |
| Charlie | : [Sound effect: electronic rejection] Insufficient value. |
| Winston | : <i>(more urgently)</i> I cheated on my final year exam at university! |
| Charlie | : [Sound effect: electronic rejection] Please try harder! |
| Winston | : <i>(exasperated)</i> What? Okay, okay, fine, fine! <i>(pause)</i> What if I said ... <i>(somberly)</i> what if I said ... I broke someone's heart? |
| Charlie | : Age at heart breaking? |
| Winston | : Twenty-two. |
| Charlie | : [Sound effect: electronic acceptance] Value is sufficient. You may apologize. [Sound effect: Recording function begins] |
| Winston | : Hi, Cherisse. This is Winston Sinclair. I want to apologize to you. That night ... by the lake. When I told you I didn't believe in love? I lied. You see I was scared of being close, so I ran away. I'm so sorry. Can you ever forgive me? <i>(he nods to Charlie to show he has finished)</i> [Sound effect: Recording function ends] |
| Charlie | : Our business is concluded. [Sound effect: robot walking] <i>(Charlie walks to the front door)</i> |
| Winston | : Robot? <i>(Charlies stops)</i> There was another girl. The love of my life. <i>(he walks towards Charlie)</i> <i>(pleadingly)</i> I want to make another apology! |
| Charlie | : Only one apology is allowed. Cherisse Deveraux will receive your apology. Karl Gustavsson will receive your acceptance. <i>(Winston opens the door resignedly)</i> [Sound effect: futuristic front door opens with voice confirmation] |
| Rachel | : <i>(she runs in from the dining room)</i> Daddy, is Charlie leaving? |
| Elizabeth | : Never mind, Charlie. I want to know who the love of your life is! |
| Winston | : You were listenin –? |
| Charlie | : Goodbye, Winston Sinclair. And good luck! [Sound effect: music outro] |

The End