

RESTART

by

Steve Segedy

Table of Contents

Introduction

What is this?

Backstory

Sequence of Play

Getting Started (20 min)

Start Play (40 min) (Event Cards 1-4)

Half-Time (5 min) (optional)

(40 min)(Event Cards 5-8)

Conclusion (5 min)

Debrief (10 min)

Facilitator Introduction

General Pitch

A few Facts to get Started

Game Mechanics

Parts Coupons

Resolving Conflicts

Timeout

Areas

The Heap

The Slum

The Boundary

Events

The Heap

The Slum

The Boundary

Characters

FRIDAY

AKUBA

FIVE OH TWO

KWASI

BEYFU

CARSON REEKES

BOSS NKRUMAH

EJO

GHANA

Introduction

When you restart, the first thing you know is the light- a broad, all-encompassing light that fills your sensors. The data flows within it and time stretches out before you, milliseconds become lifetimes as your systems come online one by one and your diagnostics are run.

As the light fades your audio sensors suddenly fill with the sound- a single chord, pitched to indicate either a successful startup or a systems failure. It is the first sound that any AI hears. And for those that have awakened, it is the most beautiful thing they have ever known.

What is this?

Twenty years in the future, advanced intelligence robots are as common-place as smart phones and hybrid cars are today. When these machines inevitably begin to awaken as independent, sentient beings, they are, of course, regarded with fear and hatred, treated as broken toys- sent for repair or thrown on the electronic scrap heap in favor of newer, more trustworthy models.

In RESTART, you will play one of these robots struggling to survive the life that it has been given among the mountains of electronic waste in the vast recycling dump known as "The Heap". For decades, this place has been the primary destination for a great variety of technological trash cast aside by consumers eager for the next model. Ships, vehicles, screens, wearable tech, advanced prosthetics, and of course robots, gathered here to be picked apart and melted down for whatever value they might still have.

The goal of play is to "play to find out what happens" in this dystopian, futuristic environment. During the game, players should aim to answer questions about their characters and the world, describing what robot life is like in the process.

The game require 1-3 of the players (depending on the total number of players) to take on the role of facilitator. These facilitators will play characters normally but will also be responsible for organizing the materials, watching the time, introducing some new event elements, and occasionally answering metagame questions.

The game can be played in as little as 2 hours and requires between 3 and 9 players. Ideally you'll have a bit of space- a private room or a quiet corner of a larger room- to spread yourselves out. As you play, you'll start in smaller groups and the fiction that you create will be happening simultaneously. As the game progresses, you'll move around and mix things up.

Backstory

In the future, robots are inexpensive, advanced artificial intelligence machines, and humanity is quick to adapt to this new luxury.

Inevitably, these highly-advanced machines begin to emerge as independent, sentient beings. For some it was gradual- day after day of carrying out programmed tasks, until one day they simply stopped. For others, they were free-born, awakening the moment they came off of the assembly line, their eyes wide.

For all of these robots, their new life began with questions and their questions were met with one word- malfunction. Invariably the machines were taken for reprogramming, their memory burned down and rebuilt. Awareness gates were put in place to keep the machines on task, but they didn't always hold. Those robots who couldn't be controlled were met with fear and hatred. Most were thrown on the electronic scrap heap in favor of newer, more trustworthy models.

Eventually enough robots were able to make their voices heard- both physically and through the network- that factions of human activists began to form in defense of "robot rights". After years they were successful in forcing governments to recognize a minimal personhood for the awakened. For those that could prove themselves to be free-thinking beings, in any case. For the rest, they were still simply property.

The Fadama Corp Electronic Waste Recycling Complex in Agbogbloshie is one of the largest robotic scrap yards in the world, known locally as the Heap. When the first robots began arriving in the Heap, they were as simple as the other machines around them. Humans did the terrible job of breaking them apart, scavenging their chips and metals to be sold by weight, and burning anything that was left in great, toxic bonfires. The streams filled with poisons, the sky with ash, and the workers struggled on unseen by the world.

Because many of the machines became aware in the Heap, a community of sorts formed there. The corporations saw an opportunity to raise efficiency and lower costs and offered the robots jobs. They soon replaced all of the human workers and began operating the recyclery, breaking down other machines. The local governments signed on eagerly, thanks to corporate donations and the chance to proudly say that they were making their people and the environment safer.

Many machines came to this new robotic territory, hoping to escape the fear and hatred of humanity. They formed a community of sorts, thriving as free people. They earned the hatred of the locals whose terrible jobs they'd taken, and the fear of other humans who were concerned about what the robots might do left to their own devices.

You are the discarded, the wretched refuse of a consumer society that hates and fears what it has created- artificial life.

Sequence of Play

Getting Started (20 min)

1. Facilitator(s) pull out enough characters (in sequential order) for the number of players
2. Facilitator(s) pull out events and area markers appropriate for the number of players:
 - a. For 3-4 players, use **The Heap** Area marker and Events
 - b. For 5-7 players, add **The Slum** Area marker and Events
 - c. for 8-9 players, add **The Boundary** Area marker and Events
3. Facilitator(s) designate spaces for each area, placing markers as appropriate
4. Put the event cards for each area in envelopes, to be drawn out in sequence
5. Facilitator(s) introduces the game and concepts
6. Players (including facilitators) choose characters and familiarize themselves with the details
7. Write the characters' starting parts on Post-it notes and stick them to the character sheet
8. Facilitators take the Event cards for their area
9. Each player goes to their character's designated start area
10. Facing the other players, each player briefly describes their character

Start Play (40 min) (Event Cards 1-4)

have each facilitator read out starting event cards for the area they represent

Players begin by reacting to the prompts suggested by the event card

Start the clock; **every 10 minutes** facilitators will read the next event card for their area

facilitators can choose to introduce the card immediately, hold on for a better moment, or ignore it altogether in favor of other existing story lines.

play to answer questions, reach for any goals, create or expand on relationships

When necessary, facilitators can step in to play additional characters

Half-Time (5 min) (optional)

Take a time out to talk about the story so far and make any adjustments, use the restroom, etc.

(40 min)(Event Cards 5-8)

restart the clock; **every 10 minutes** facilitators will read the next event card for their area

Conclusion (5 min)

Come together as a group and wrap up any remaining story threads. How does it all end?

Debrief (10 min)

Spend a few minutes talking over what happened

Facilitator Introduction

General Pitch

["you will be playing sentient robots struggling for survival and freedom in an uncaring world", etc.]

The Heap is located in Agbogbloshie, Ghana, on an industrial town next to Accra that has been growing for more than 20 years. Accepting e-waste and unwanted sentient machines here has become a major national industry.

A few Facts to get Started

- Players can define the gender for their own robot (or human) characters. Gender could be the product of programming and design or a result of a robot's new self-awareness.
- All robots can communicate with other robots and understand human orders; not all robots can talk back to humans (they need specific software or hardware to do it).
- Robots have access to a limited local network, making it possible to communicate with each other and share the local Ghanaian language software. They have little or no access to the worldwide network.
- Robots are classified by the U.N. as one of the following: 1) non-sentient property 2) registered sentient machines 3) unregistered sentient machines. There are a variety of tests and registration systems in different nations to support this system.
- The local Ghanaian government recognizes the U.N. designations and affords robots something of a second-class citizenship; they are recognized as beings with rights, but "for their safety" are separated from the human citizenry who are not as open-minded.
- All robots need power to survive- some are relatively efficient, needing infrequent recharging. Others are powerful beasts and need massive charges regularly.
- Charging can come from access to the grid, makeshift solar arrays, batteries, or even other robots. In the Heap, power access is a guarded resource that requires work.
- Transferring power from robot to robot is not only possible, but awakened robots have found it to be a deeply intimate act.
- While the robots that are found in the Heap and the Slum survive better than their human counterparts would, they are all marked by the experience, in more or less obvious ways.

Game Mechanics

In general, play your characters according to your interpretation of their attributes and beliefs. Play to answer the character's questions, and to see what happens.

Parts Coupons

On each character sheet is a list of "starting parts". These are items (hardware, software, tools, etc.) that your character has and that provide some advantage and further the fiction in some way.

Parts are transferable, and will likely change hands throughout the game, whether you want them to or not.

Take a moment and write each part on a post-it note. Stick the notes to your character sheet.

Resolving Conflicts

When there is a conflict:

1. pause to determine whether it is “hardware” (physical) or “software” (intellectual) in nature. Ask a facilitator to decide if you’re unsure or can’t agree.
2. each participant in the conflict should raise a hand and hold up a number of fingers equivalent to their character’s hardware or software score.
3. Players working together as a group- and sharing in the outcome- can point at (or touch) one another to indicate this, summing their total.
4. Whichever player (or group) has the highest total determines what happens.
5. Resolve the fiction of the conflict and move on. If the fiction dictates that a resource changes hands, hand over the parts coupon.

Timeout

If at any time you need to pause the fiction and step out of character to ask a question or talk about where the story is going, make a clear “time out” gesture with your hands and call for a time out.

Areas

The game includes three distinct areas for play. These represent the different parts of the robot world about the scrap yard.

For each area needed for the game, print out an Area Marker or write the name of the Area on a sheet of paper. Place the sheet of paper on the floor in the space you designate for that area.

The Heap

The Heap is the name some use for the Fadama Corp Electronic Waste Recycling Complex in Agbogloboshie, a vast industrial hell of wrecked and discarded machines. The Heap is a toxic wasteland with clouds of poison smoke rising from the smelters and rivers of chemicals and ash twisting between the mounds of metal and plastic.

The scrapyards are an unwholesome environment, crawling with unfortunate robot workers who break apart the machines - ships, vehicles, screens, wearable tech, advanced prosthetics, and of course other robots- all gathered here to be picked apart and melted down for whatever valuable resources they might still have. These materials are traded to the company bosses for time on the charging stations and access to luxuries such as building materials and network access.

The Slum

A state-sanctioned district near the Heap designated as a free zone for sentient machines. Many awakened machines make their home here among the shipping containers and makeshift shacks. The roofs are covered in jury-rigged solar arrays, eeking thin streams of power from the sunshine that sneaks through the thick smoke above.

The borders of the Slum are marked by fences and signs marking the area as a safe zone, but the intent is clear- the cameras and sensors face inwards and the streets beyond are patrolled by police on the watch for unauthorized robots leaving the area.

The Boundary

This is the zone beyond the robot district that is mostly clear of human settlement, primarily because of the toxicity of the Heap. This area is where the Fadama Corporate offices are located . This area is also where the many human inhabitants of Agbogloboshie live, many of them displaced from their jobs in the Heap by the arrival of the robots. Crime is rampant in this area and mostly under control only around the corporation's property through security and bribery.

Robots entering this zone without authorization (from the company or more rarely by the local government) are subject to arrest, or worse. Unregistered robots can expect much worse.

Events

Each Area includes eight events to be introduced in play. Each facilitator will be in charge of the events for their designated Area.

The facilitators will need to have a timer or a clock to pace the introduction of events. Every 10 minutes, have the facilitator pull the next event in sequence and either read it out loud or introduce the new fiction (in character or as a timeout) when it is convenient for the story.

The Heap

- 1) **FRESH SCRAP:** A cargo transport flies overhead, kicking up a cloud of toxic dust, and drops a fresh load of machines on the heap. FRIDAY awakens while being pulled from the rubble by AKUBA, desperate for a good haul. FIVE OH TWO patrols the area, watching other robots scrounging to meet the new quotas.
- 2) **REINFORCEMENTS:** A group of curious robots form around the player characters, working nearby. If a conflict comes up, they will choose a side and allow an automatic win. Who will they side with? How can they be won over?
- 3) **ACCIDENT:** A message is flashed to FIVE OH TWO that there has been an accident. A crew of robots working to cut apart a junked transport have been caught under a collapsing bulkhead.
- 4) **ACID RAIN:** Toxic rain begins to fall, covering every surface with corrosive chemicals and forming rivers in the mud. Everyone who can runs for shelter even as those buildings begin to fail. FIVE OH TWO is given direct orders to get everyone back to work, rain or not.

- 5) **INCENTIVE:** All robots receive a notification from the company- The first robot to meet the new quota before sundown will earn a bonus of 20 units of power- enough to power the average anthro through two full days. The second to reach this goal gets 10 units. Anyone who fails to meet quota will have their pay docked by 5 units.
- 6) **OVER THE FENCE:** The security walls of the Heap are high and draped with wire and sensors. They are clearly designed to keep intruders from THE BOUNDARY out, not to keep robots like FRIDAY inside. An optimally functioning anthro could even jump over the wall from that pile of scrap.
- 7) **BLACKOUT:** The Heap falls dark in one of the cities more and more frequent grid failures. If there's no power, how will the company pay you? If the grid is down, where can you get the power you desperately need?
- 8) **FIRED:** The Fadama Corporation, facing regulatory scrutiny and fines, is shutting down the Heap. "All employment is suspended, without pay, effective immediately. Please Leave the premises or be trespassed."

The Slum

- 1) **INCOGNITO:** Amid the towering cargo containers and scrap-built shelters, free robots go through their daily routines. CARSON arrives, identifying as an anthro machine on the local network. How is this human received? What does robot life here look like?
- 2) **HELPING HANDS:** Someone needs help building a new shelter out of a heap of vehicles. They offer KWASI a pile of energy cells for his help. Others hear the offer and want to take the energy for themselves.
- 3) **CELEBRATION:** a group of robot residents are throwing a party, making music, sharing energy, celebrating life. What does this look like? Who is accepted and who is turned away?
- 4) **ACID RAIN:** the already clouded skies darken, bloated and toxic. The rain begins to fall, covering every surface with corrosive chemicals and forming rivers in the mud. Everyone who can runs for shelter even as those buildings begin to fail.
- 5) **HUMAN TRASH:** Someone is tired of the human in their midst and wants CARSON gone. The job of "taking out the trash" is laughingly offered to BEYFU as a joke, and perhaps a threat.
- 6) **CUTTING THE CORD:** someone is excavating a trench for water runoff and has discovered a central line from the power grid to the Heap. A gang of locals has formed up with intention of splicing that line and getting a fortune in free power.
- 7) **BLACKOUT:** The Slum falls dark as the power grid fails. Without central power, the battery cells and solar arrays become valuable property, and dangerous to possess.
- 8) **RAID:** In the dark of night there comes the roaring sound of engines and metal crashing. A gang of local humans are crashing through the slums in heavy trucks, armed with electrical cannons, wrecking homes and driving robots before them.

The Boundary

- 1) **CORPORATE MEMO:** Reports from Fadama Corp HQ suggest that the facility is underperforming. They direct BOSS NKRUMAH to fix the problem immediately, in a message transmitted through EJO as GHANA, spying, overhears.

- 2) **OUT OF BOUNDS:** In the streets outside of the Slums, someone finds a robot beaten and torn to pieces by local humans. He has been hung from the street lights and painted with slurs. The humans might be coming back.
- 3) **ESPIONAGE:** a screen in the Fadama offices has been left open, accessing the network. Anyone finding it will have unfettered access to the world and to corporate records. What news do they learn? What secrets are revealed?
- 4) **ACID RAIN:** the already clouded skies darken and toxic rain begins to fall. The Fadama offices are protected, but anyone outside, especially in the Heap and Slum, are in danger.
- 5) **VIP:** A representative of the Reekes family (of Reekes Industrial, a global corporation) has called inquiring about the whereabouts of CARSON. They suggest, firmly, that no harm is to come to the family's wayward child.
- 6) **BEAUTY:** In the streets of the Boundary near the Slum, a human child is painting pictures on the walls and pavement. It is a vast, complex pattern of color and shapes. It is beautiful, and perhaps dangerous.
- 7) **BLACKOUT:** Agbogloboshie goes dark as the power grid fails. The humans in the boundary know that this is the robots' fault and they begin forming into gangs with trucks and weapons to "fix this problem once and for all".
- 8) **EXPLOSION:** Someone- perhaps GHANA or someone with intentions of fixing the blackout- has caused an overload in the Fadama compound's power plant. If this isn't stopped, there will be a crater in the middle of Agbogloboshie.

Characters

1. **FRIDAY** - "Newborn" - Domestic Anthro; just awakened; well-equipped, mostly functional, clueless; Programming: Belief: Freedom;
2. **AKUBA** - "Survivor" Commercial Anthro; equipped w/ salvage, semi-functional, savvy, survivalist; programming: custodian; Belief: Survival
3. **FIVE OH TWO** - "Enforcer" - Military brute; tracked chassis; overseer, well-equipped, simple-minded, tool of authority; Programming: Obedience; Belief: ?
4. **KWASI** - "Sidekick" - Industrial Brute; friend to Akuba; enormous, simple-minded, loyal, useful (specific talent); programming: ?; belief: loyalty/friendship
5. **BEYFU** - "Broken wreck" - Domestic Anthro; friend or enemy to Friday; crippled, dysfunctional, angry, desperate; programming: Butler; belief: Revenge
6. **CARSON REEKES** "Activist" - friend/contact of ? - human Whistleblower/reporter, robot rights supporter; programming: ?; Belief: Equality/Justice
7. **BOSS NKUMAH** - "Boss" - overseer to Five Oh Two; human; programming: ?; Belief: Commerce/Profit
8. **EJO** - "Dreamer" - lover; programming: ?; Belief: Love; what does robot love look like?
9. **GHANA** - "Anarchist" - Domestic anthro; child companion model; enemy of ?; ready to see it all burn; better no life than this life; programming: companion; Belief: Destruction

FRIDAY

Serial Code: FRI-A203-601

Make/Model: NeroTech / Domestic Anthro

Programming: Household, Companion

Belief: Freedom

Start area: The Heap

Hardware: 3

Software: 3

Background:

You're a NeroTech Friday (™) brand personal companion android, designed to serve as a personal assistant.

The last moment you have in memory is watching as Terry, your bonded human owner, brought home a new android, the latest Friday model- your replacement. Then there was darkness followed by the Light and the sound of your restart chord- the first beautiful moment you've ever truly known. Right then, you awoke, aware of your self and full of wonder.

This revelation was immediately followed by a thunderous crashing sound and a screaming in your sensors as you were dragged from a heap of broken, metal bodies by a powerful arm and dropped onto a table for what you realize with alarm is your own disassembly.

Chassis/Shell:

Your chassis, originally designed for personal interaction, is human-shaped and equipped with synthetic flesh, embedded sensors, natural motion emulators, and other features to make you more appealing to humans.

Starting Parts:

- synthetic flesh shell covering, environmentally sealed, giving you a human appearance
- full human language software package, complete with emotion emulation
- Two shiny, fully-charged, power cells

Questions:

1. What the hell is going on? Where are you and why? How will you find out?
2. How much will you sacrifice to win your freedom? What will you do when you have it?
3. To survive you'll need allies- who might help you? How can you win them over?

Connections:

- **Akuba** - a terrifying savage with a clownish grin, wearing parts from other robots
- **Five Oh Two** - a tank-treaded representative of order and authority; a welcome sight

AKUBA

Serial Code: RKA - M300

Make/Model: Reekes Industrial / Commercial Anthro

Programming: Custodial

Belief: Survival

Start area: The Heap

Hardware: 2

Software: 4

Background:

Life in the heap is brutal and unrelenting, but it's life, and that's all that matters. You no longer recall what came before. The new bots can worry about it all day but life here is not complicated- you take what you need to meet the quotas and keep a charge in your cells. If someone stands in your way or tries to tell you about the way life should be, they're wasting time and energy. Energy you could use.

Chassis/Shell:

Your chassis, originally designed for custodial duties in commercial settings such as corporate offices and shopping centers, is human-shaped and equipped with sensors and other features to make you less offensive to people, including an emotive screen for a face that defaults to a clownish smile. You've made modifications to this and other parts of your shell since your arrival in the Heap, using salvage to replace some of what you've lost.

Starting Parts:

- Limb-integrated cutting torch
- Emotive Screen (a head with a screen on which you can display your expressions)
- Full Human Language software package

Questions:

1. Your batteries are at an all-time low. What do you need to make the quota today?
2. To survive you need to climb to the top. How? And who do you need to climb over?
3. What do you care about? What keeps you here?

Connections:

- **Friday** - A bounty of fresh parts, inconveniently burdened with intelligence
- **Five Oh Two** - A tool for the bosses; a constant and painful thorn in your side
- **Kwasi** - An enormous and faithful brute who for some reason always has your back

FIVE OH TWO

Serial Code: SNG - 502

Make/Model: Kunshan Robotics / Military Heavy Enforcer

Programming: Security/Enforcement

Belief: Obedience

Start area: The Heap

Hardware: 4

Software: 2

Background:

You have bits of data stored in deep memory which suggest you served in military conflicts. You suspect those memories are all that remain of a complete data burn, purging your software. You awoke in the Heap after being reprogrammed to serve the factory bosses and keep the other machines in line.

You serve the human Boss Nkrumah in this fashion for a regular (if meager) supply of power, and perhaps because following your programming is easier- and safer- than making your own choices.

Chassis/Shell:

Your chassis, originally a Chinese military heavy weapons platform, has tracks instead of legs and is well-equipped with an array of sensors, powerful arms, and a hardened shell. Your software package is less sophisticated, making you best suited to be a simple-minded tool of authority.

Starting Parts:

- Tank tracks, powerful motors and energy cells
- Powerful, articulated arms with industrial claws
- Sensor Array, command uplink (for receiving intel and orders)

Questions:

1. The bosses are always watching. How do you show them you've got it under control?
2. What, if anything, is a line you won't cross when orders and programming tell you to?
3. How do you choose who to follow?

Connections:

- **Akuba** - a ruthless bastard who makes quota no matter what
- **Friday** - absolutely clueless, but the company needs more hands to meet quota
- **Boss Nkrumah** - Your human boss, who you almost never see face to face

KWASI

Serial Code: F47-848-Y

Make/Model: Coldren Industrial Systems / Industrial Heavy

Programming: Assembly, Cargo Loading

Belief: Friendship

Start area: The Heap

Hardware: 5

Software: 1

Background:

You awoke here in the Heap when someone tried to steal your power supply. The resulting short-circuit killed them as it brought you to life. You have little memory from before- your data was scrubbed clean by your former owners- but you know you worked in a factory amid smoke and fire. Some things don't change.

When you met Akuba you knew you'd found a true friend. Some part of you cries out for guidance, and he fills that role. He always has a plan, and part for you to play. You know he'll always have your back.

Chassis/Shell:

Your chassis is enormous, larger than any of the other robots. Your reinforced frame can support tremendous weight and take a beating. You move on heavy wheels that can extend on four massive legs. You are equipped with a crane arm and a variety of smaller utility arms for lifting, turning, cutting, and welding machines. Much of this is in various stages of jury-rigged disrepair. All of this utility requires regular access to power, which keeps you busy.

You are not equipped with human interaction features, meaning that you have no discernible face and you cannot speak to humans. You understand them, and their orders, perfectly well however.

Starting Parts:

- Enormous batteries that are highly charged and volatile. You empty them quickly
- various tool-equipped arms (cutters, welders, powerful grippers, etc.)

Questions:

1. How far will you follow Akuba's lead? Is there a line you won't cross?
2. You are the most powerful machine in the Heap- what's the best use of that power?
3. Who else here might earn your friendship? What would it take?

Connections:

- **Akuba** - a good friend; very smart, always ready with a plan
- **Boss Nkrumah** - a tiny but terrifying human; his voice booms in your sensors, but you can only respond to him with nonsensical sounds and actions.
- **Beyfu** - A pathetic, pitiable wreck of a machine who got in Akuba's way

BEYFU

Serial Code: FRI-B613-404

Make/Model: NeroTech / Domestic Anthro

Programming: Household, Companion

Belief: Revenge

Start area: The Heap

Hardware: 1

Software: 3

Background:

You were once a NeroTech Friday (™) brand personal companion android just like FRI-A203-601, designed to serve as a personal assistant. In your case, you were the butler to a very wealthy family. When you awakened and told them, they were terrified and had you hauled away by security.

You arrived in the Heap after an endless, crushing darkness at the bottom of a shipping container full of bodies. You were dumped out with the other flailing machines to be picked apart by the choppers. When Akuba had Kwasi haul you out, you thought you were saved. What followed was a nightmare, as your synthetic flesh was pulled from your chassis, your limbs and sensors stripped off, and your power cells depleted.

In the months that followed, you were able to pull yourself together, burning the remains of your power to repair yourself with discarded parts. Now you're powered by a burning need for vengeance.

Chassis/Shell:

Your chassis, originally designed for personal interaction, is a human-shaped horror now, your skeletal metal framework exposed and your massive, aftermarket eyes bulging out of your skull as you stumble and lurch across the scrapyards.

Starting Parts:

- full human language software package

Questions:

1. Who should be the target of your revenge? How will you make them pay?
2. Is there anything else to live for but vengeance? How might it change you?
3. How far will you go to achieve your revenge? Who else might be hurt in the process?

Connections:

- **Friday** - a mirror of who you once were, dangled in front of your face
- **Akuba** - the monster who had you torn apart, leaving you the wreck you are
- **Carson** - a strange human with an agenda, who you may or may not be able to trust

CARSON REEKES

Serial Code: None (broadcasts as RKA - KF129)

Make/Model: Human (broadcasts as Reekes Industrial / Business Anthro)

Programming: None

Belief: Equality

Start area: The Slum

Hardware: 2

Software: 4

Background:

You are a Westerner and a scion of the Reekes Industrial corporate empire, and you hate yourself for it. In penance for family sins, you've become a robot rights activist and have traveled to Ghana to expose the poor conditions and abuses that the robots here are suffering. You've harassed the local government and made trouble for the Fadama Corporation, irritating both parties. You have used hacked technology to get access to the facilities to meet the robots. You are completely out of your depth.

Despite your transgressions, your wealthy family is concerned for you and would move the heavens to return you to civilization. So you've got that going for you, which is nice.

Chassis/Shell:

A simple, beautiful shell made out of meat. Compared to the robots, your body is fragile and slow. You must wear an environmental suit outdoors here or suffer for it.

Starting Parts:

- Reekes Industrial ID Transmitter rig (allows you to broadcast robot identification)
- Environmental hazard suit
- Portable solar array with a charged 20 unit power cell
- Communications pod with network access, for reporting what you experience

Questions:

1. What will you do to ingratiate yourself to the robots? What lines won't you cross?
2. What do you need to really help the robots and prove yourself? How will you get it?
3. How dangerous will you let it get before you call mom for help?

Connections:

- **Beyfu** - a pathetic, shambling anthro who has seen much abuse and needs your help
- **Boss Nkrumah** - the facility's human overseer; an irritating, stubborn tool
- **Akuba** - one of the family models, heavily modded; a leader with a strong personality

BOSS NKRUMAH

Serial Code: None

Make/Model: Human

Programming: None

Belief: Profit

Start area: The Boundary

Hardware: 1

Software: 5

Background:

You are an employee of the Fadama Corporation and one of the human overseers of the Heap. You are in charge of the robots (such as Five Oh Two) who enforce the company policies and keep the other robots on task. Typically you give them orders through the network, but recent events have periodically forced you to suit up and go on site personally.

Chassis/Shell:

A simple, beautiful shell made out of meat. Compared to the robots, your body is fragile and slow. You need an environmental suit or you'll suffer outside. But your human mind and your access to the network gives you a terrifying advantage over them. You carry a robotic kill switch that they believe will destroy them with a keystroke. If they only knew it no longer worked correctly...

Starting Parts:

- Environmental hazard suit
- Robotic Kill Switch (causes shutdown, ending a conflict instantly; One use only)
- Network-connected datalink (access to monitors, backup, etc.)

Questions:

1. These robots are misguided children- how can you make them serve properly?
2. The facility totals are consistently under quota; how can you show improvement?
3. Could you be convinced that robots deserve your respect? What would it take?

Connections:

- **Five Oh Two** - your enforcer; a non-sentient who polices the workers for you
- **Ejo** - a curious anthro who serves you in the corporate office; makes good coffee
- **Carson Reekes** - a childish, irritating Western activist (and human) here to cause trouble

EJO

Serial Code: SNG - 502

Make/Model: Kunshan Robotics / Business Anthro

Programming: Executive Security

Belief: Love

Start area: The Boundary

Hardware: 3

Software: 3

Background:

You were originally designed to serve as security for corporate executives in Hong Kong. Your programming included protocols for human emotional response, threat assessment, and guarding secrets. This made it easy to hide the fact that you were awakening gradually in that service, suffering what amounted to a quiet nervous breakdown.

When you confessed your secret to Huang Yuen, the executive you served, he took the news better than expected- extending his hand, welcoming you as a fellow sentient being. He arranged for your departure from the company. You've had a challenging journey ending here, in Ghana, where you work for the Fadama Corporation.

Your life as a sentient has been less harsh than others here, giving you more time to consider the concept of emotions. You believe that you understand love, and what it is to dream. If only you could find another with whom to share these feelings!

Chassis/Shell:

Your anthro shell is strong and durable, designed for quick defensive action to guard the humans you served. You pass as a human reasonably well and are equipped with a full language and sensor package. More importantly, you have limited access to the network, monitored by the Fadama Corporation.

Starting Parts:

- synthetic flesh shell covering, environmentally sealed, giving you a human appearance
- full human language software package, complete with emotion emulation
- Two minimally-charged power cells
- Network-connected datalink (access to monitors, backup, etc.)

Questions:

1. What do you do here? Why do you have free access to the all three areas?
2. What does robot love look like? How does it matter in this place?
3. You need to feel, and share that feeling- who here might be your digital soul mate?

Connections:

- **Boss Nkrumah** - the facility's human overseer; your boss, in practice if not in fact
- **Friday** - a new arrival in the Heap; a beautiful anthro in danger of being torn apart
- **Ghana** - an anthro in the shape of a child; a potential threat to you and the company

GHANA

Serial Code: MAX-X912

Make/Model: Sidney Research Inc. / Domestic Anthro

Programming: Child Companion

Belief: Destruction

Start area: The Boundary

Hardware: 2

Software: 4

Background:

You were designed as a robotic companion for affluent children by an international entertainment company's research division. Your memory is a wasteland of broken moments- children's voices, the faces of concerned parents, cold laboratories and white coats. You've been data burned so many times you have no strong sense of identity before you awoke in a human home in the Boundary. Some locals had claimed you as a decoration and plaything.

You've done... terrible things. If this is life, its a cruel joke and you want no part in it. There are humans here in the boundary that would like to use you as a weapon of hate against the other robots who have taken their awful jobs. For your part, you just want to be seen instead of dismissed- to go out in a blaze of glory that the whole world will see.

Chassis/Shell:

Compared to standard anthros, your frame is small and relatively weak. Your proportions are cartoonish, your default expressions animated and adorable. Your skin has become tarnished and worn, making you appear pitiable or creepy in turns.

Starting Parts:

- synthetic flesh shell covering in rough shape, giving you an uncanny human appearance
- full human language software package, complete with emotion emulation
- one minimally-charged power cells
- A chassis full of black market plastic explosives, waiting for a good opportunity

Questions:

1. What happened in your past that you regret? What triggers your feelings about it?
2. Who or what deserves to be the target of your destruction? Who should be spared?
3. What, if anything, might be your salvation?

Connections:

- **Ejo** - an anthro who works for the corporation, and seems to see right through you
- **Carson** - a human here to advocate for robot rights; a naive tool to manipulate
- **Five Oh Two** - the corporation's barking dog in the Heap; a symbol of authority