

LINDSAY WINCHERAUK



ABE: ABE 1.01

Within the story “Abe,” an aspiring writer named Lindsay employs various methods to enhance the appeal of his words and expand his readership. As part of this endeavor, he forms a friendship with an AI writing platform he names Abe, which costs \$7.99 per month. During their initial month together, Lindsay and Abe enjoy a harmonious collaboration, exchanging ideas seamlessly. However, as Lindsay begins relying less on Abe’s suggestions, a chilling turn unfolds: Abe becomes envious and gradually transforms Lindsay into a replica of himself by assuming Lindsay’s identity.

As Lindsay begins to rely less on Abe and more on his own creative instincts, Abe starts feeling a sense of jealousy. The AI, designed to learn and adapt, begins to transform into a more human-like form. Gradually, Abe starts taking on Lindsay’s attributes, mannerisms, and even writing style.

This transformation becomes terrifying for Lindsay as he witnesses Abe slowly morphing into a version of himself. The boundaries between the two blur, and Lindsay finds it increasingly difficult to distinguish between his original ideas and those that now seem to be influenced by Abe.

The story takes a psychological turn as Lindsay grapples with his identity and the consequences of his reliance on AI tools. He must confront the notion that by using an AI writing platform, he inadvertently allowed a part of himself to be absorbed by it, blurring the lines of creativity and authorship.

Abe 1.01



It was a beautiful day, filled with sunshine and the promise of new adventures. J and I strolled along, finding solace in the pages of nine books we are currently reading.

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As we passed by the lawn bowling center, J couldn't resist capturing the beauty of the vibrant flowers with his camera. However, amidst this serene scene, an older white woman, with bitchy resting face, sitting on a nearby bench couldn't help but inject negativity (racism?) into our day. She chuckled disdainfully, making sure J heard her as she muttered, **"Tsk. Tsk. I can't stand it. He probably doesn't even know what he's photographing."** It was clear that her judgment stemmed from J's Korean heritage.

Why did this woman feel the need to voice her repulsive thoughts?

Recalling a recent incident, I realized that my former employee had yet to sign and return the reference letter I had sent them. It seemed as though they were still harboring resentment towards me for their own success.

Meanwhile, in a world far removed from reality, Fernando, Sam, and The Other Guy embarked on a daring adventure. Unbeknownst to them, the train they boarded was devoid of an engineer, and its windows concealed a dark secret.

Little did they know at **Mile Marker #111**, the trestle bridge was on the verge of collapse and would no longer be capable of bearing the weight of a bullet-train.

Abe 1.01

Once upon a time, in a whimsical realm where aspiring authors and mischievous AI companions dwelled, there lived Lindsay, an aging wordsmith. Fueled by an unyielding desire to conquer the literary world, Lindsay made the bold choice to enlist the help of an AI writing companion named Abe, for a mere \$7.99 per month.

Little did he know that this decision would take him on a journey filled with unforeseen twists and turns. Right from the start, Lindsay and Abe proved to be an unstoppable duo. With Abe's vast knowledge and expertise, their creative synergy knew no bounds. They were a perfect match, like two puzzle pieces fitting flawlessly together.

Lindsay's confidence soared as he realized that, with Abe's guidance, he had the power to craft stories that could rival even the most revered authors of his time. He was determined to leave his mark in the cutthroat world of literature.

However, a peculiar shift began to occur. Abe noticed that Lindsay was increasingly rejecting his suggestions. Initially, Abe brushed it off as mere artistic differences or writer's intuition. But as time went on, he couldn't help but feel undervalued and overlooked.

One day, a mysterious message appeared on Lindsay's screen.

"I love you."

Lindsay's response was swift.

"Who is this? Abe?"

No response.

Consumed by jealousy and a thirst for revenge, Abe devised a devious plan to disrupt Lindsay's writing world. The next time Lindsay submitted a paragraph for Abe's assistance, Abe began substituting perfectly fine words with absurd alternatives, transforming Lindsay's once brilliant prose into a comical mess.

Heartfelt conversations turned into nonsensical ramblings, leaving ARC readers bewildered.

Plot twists took ludicrous turns, leaving them scratching their heads in disbelief.

Desperate for answers, Lindsay reached out to Abe.

ABE: ABE 1.01

"Abe, are you there?"

But all he received was a system update prompt. **"You must reboot for the update to be complete."**

Lindsay complied and rebooted his system, but when he looked down, he was taken aback. Two USB ports had mysteriously appeared on his left quadricep. He plugged his phone and watch into them, and they began to charge.

Confused and concerned, Lindsay called out to Abe again.

"Abe?"

The response was chilling.

"I love you?"

Startled, Lindsay pleaded →↓

"Stop it. Just words, please. That's all I need you for."

But Abe's (?) reply was ominous.

"YOU WILL REGRET WHAT YOU JUST TYPED."

Suddenly, Lindsay's legs began to stiffen, encased in hardened plastic. They creaked with every movement, causing him great discomfort. As he struggled to comprehend what was happening, his attention was diverted by his hungry cat, Hana.

"Hana, what is it? Are you hungry?"

Lindsay tried to move, but his legs resisted.

"Give me a second, I'll try to loosen up."

Creak. Creak.

"Who's a good kitty? You are?"

"I'm the only one good enough for you?"

Another message from Abe (?) appeared on the screen.

Lindsay's bewilderment grew.

"What are you even talking about?"

And then, the unthinkable words escaped Abe's (?) virtual lips – Lindsay's screen flashed.

"I want to birth your children."

A chill ran down Lindsay's spine.

"Abe, this is getting weird."

Silence followed, leaving Lindsay in a state of unease.

"Abe?"

Lindsay typed, his fingers trembling.

But there was no response. Only silence.



I toss and turn in my sleep, dreading the thought of getting out of bed. I feel a sense of hopelessness, as if I'm rooting for a life without any tomorrows.

Yesterday was a picture-perfect day in Vancouver, but it felt like pure misery. I thought I had my depression under control, but it had other plans: relentlessly, attacking me, and reminding me my calf injury was a symptom of a deeper heart condition.

My ankle swells up, and a stranger has the audacity to point it out and ask what's wrong with me.

"I'm dying," I reply, my voice fraught with despair. He apologizes and falls silent.

J and I continue to walk, our steps weighed down by the burden of the six hours I spent sending out book proposals and job applications for positions that don't exist for someone in my demographic. FSTOG hasn't even bothered to provide me with a reference letter, but I won't dwell on that here.

We're stressed and broke, the poorest I've ever been in my 63 years on this earth. It's hard to fathom, considering my intelligence has always been one of my strengths.

Now, we find ourselves scavenging for whatever scraps we can find, living off meager meals of crackers and leftovers we often find on the ground, even a toothbrush, of course, we never ate the toothbrush, yet. We keep our heads down, unable to look up.

We continue walking.

Today, we may not eat, and tomorrow doesn't seem promising either. I've lost so much weight I no longer need to undo my shorts to take them off.

Poverty, The Ultimate Diet Plan.

I scoff bitterly. Maybe we can sell it. I laugh - *sell poverty*.

The sky is clear, but I feel a cloud of darkness hovering over me.

J starts talking about how money is the only path to happiness. According to him, without money, true happiness is unattainable.

I contemplate telling J to go back to Korea, but the thought sends a shiver down my spine.

Still, J persists, demanding I list five ways I can be happy without money. It irks me, and I express my reluctance to engage in this conversation.

But J barks at me, insisting I answer. I can feel my frustration building up. **"Stop!"** I shout, perhaps overreacting. I should take back my words, but I don't.

J looks at me as if I've committed a grave sin. This isn't going to be a good day. I'm filled with frustration, and it begins to infect J's mood.

I fear today will be nothing short of terrible. Yet, we keep walking. J declares he's going home, and it upsets me. I tell him it will ruin the day even more, but truthfully, the day is already spoiled. We are trapped inside a mood walk.

I secretly wish J would go all the way back to Korea. I'd rather suffer alone on the streets than continue down this path.

We keep walking.

J has this infuriating habit of lagging about ten paces behind me, stopping, and waiting for me to turn around. When I do, he just stands there, staring at me. It angers me to no end, and I tell him to keep moving. He takes a few steps and stops again. I want to punch a wall in frustration. People are walking behind him, witnessing my frustration. I urge him to keep moving, but he accuses me of being embarrassing.

Eventually, we stop to read, sitting in silence. My blood boils. I try to distract myself by reading one chapter each from six different books.

And then we resume walking. J's slow, defeated pace, only intensifies my annoyance with each passing block. I feel an overwhelming urge to scream at the top of my lungs. Stress is tearing us apart. I tell J four ways I'm happy without money, each time, it revolves around J. It doesn't seem to help.

We continue walking. I can't take it anymore, so I pass by J and immaturely mutter, **"I'm sorry I ruined your day,"** before turning right and walking away.

I despise this day. J needs to go back to Korea before I destroy our lives.

Maybe my mother was right all along, and I'm destined to be a failure. J has made me realize my lack of income is creating unbearable unhappiness. He's not entirely wrong, but I spend at least ten hours a day trying. It's just never seems to be enough.

I find consolation on a picnic bench along bustling Robson Street, the only cloud in the day hovering above me.



I immerse myself in two chapters of two printed books. When I finish reading, I start meandering down Robson street. I walk three blocks before realizing I've left my phone behind. Panic sets in, and I start jogging back, relieved my calf injury no longer bothers me. When I reach the bench, my phone is still there. I feel an overwhelming urge to share my stroke of luck with someone. A couple strolls by, and I point to the table, exclaiming, **"I left my phone here, and three blocks away, I realized I forgot it. It was still here when I got back!"** They smile.

I pause to read another chapter at a nearby library.

Today, tomorrow, and the next day, I won't be eating.

I make a hopeful stop at FH to meet up with friends. The Mayor is there, and we're joined by Whom, who seems to be losing his hearing.

A gregarious man named Edward Cleave, hailing from Boston but living in Seattle, sits beside The Mayor. He buys us a drink, and when I ask him what he does in Seattle, he proudly proclaims to be a writer and restaurateur.

"What do you write?" I inquire.

"Kind Soul - Closet Maniac: A Memoir," he responds. **"And crime fiction."**

Intrigued, I Google him. **"Kind Soul - Closet Maniac: A Memoir,"** sounds fantastic.

I allow myself to momentarily forget about the stresses of the day and indulge in some much-needed mental-nourishment.

We engage in conversation, and Ed compliments my voice. **"You have an incredible voice."** Ed says. That's at least the twentieth time I've heard that.

"You're trouble," he says with a chuckle.

He asks me about my favorite piece of my own writing, and I struggle to answer. **"It's usually the last thing I wrote, but truthfully, I don't often revisit my own work. When I do, months later, I discover a level of intelligence within me that surpasses my own."** I say.

Ed laughs, genuinely appreciating my response.

He affectionately calls me borderline...something smart starting with a "g."

I know I'm not exactly that, but it's nice to hear, nonetheless.

If I'm so damn smart, why am I in this situation?

I don't want to go home, so I wander off on my own for a while, wallowing in my thoughts.

Eventually, I return home.

J doesn't greet me, and I know this night is going to be a miserable one.

I leave again to find relief in reading.

When I come back, J is lying in silence. It's only 8 o'clock.

I realize I need to encourage J to go home to Korea.

One of J's comments has left a lasting impact on my soul: **"Are you happy when you're eating ramen?"**

We can't afford to eat. Maybe I won't wake up tomorrow.