THERE HE STANDS!! IT IS ... X!!

DESTROY HIM!! BEFORE IT IS TOO LATE!

YOU ARE ALREADY TOO LATE, MORTALS!! NOTHING CAN STOP ME NOW!

THIS IS MY STORY!! FOR "I AM X"
Once there was nothing for me but darkness... emptiness...

Then came the sudden electrifying burst of light!

And after the light I could see blurred, hazy shapes...

Soon the shapes became clear... and with sight came sound!

He sees me! He's aware of me! I've done it! I've created a conscious robot!!

Let me see you move! That's it--now speak to me!

I-am-robot-x! I can see--and hear--and touch!

It's wonderful, professor! For years mankind has been using...

...lifeless robots that can act only in response to human commands! But now, for the first time in history, you have created a new kind of robot!

You have created a robot that can think for itself!

Tell us, X... how does it feel to be a thinking robot?

It is exciting, being able to think my own thoughts. Why, of my own will, I can bend, down and clutch the iron pipe...

...and bend it... twist it into a knot!

Look! He bends the iron as if it were cardboard!

Robot X has enormous strength! That, plus his great thinking power, will make him a boon to mankind!
My inventor, Professor Jonathan Wilkes, soon took me before the world governing council... where I demonstrated my mental abilities!

It's fantastic! The machine is actually composing a sonata! X is the only robot in the world capable of creative thought!

For hours I performed astounding feats! I did everything from writing essays to advancing new mathematical theories.

Gentlemen, you've seen enough to realize how valuable robot X is! If you approve, I will build more robots like X!

I'm all for it! We can use X-type robots in all walks of life!

They could help industry with plans and theories!

They could work alongside our scientists and generals!

But though the world's reaction to me was favorable, there was one voice that was loud and critical!

Extra! "Daily Clarion" opposes building X robots! Read all about it!

They're against X robots?!! I'd better find out why!

They claim that thinking robots are dangerous! Bah! I'll go see the Clarion's publisher and show him he's wrong!

But when my inventor spoke to Charles J. Wentworth, publisher of the Daily Clarion...

No matter what you say, I'm against having thinking robots in society! Why, robots like X would be put in key jobs! They'd have power and influence! After awhile they might decide to turn on mankind and take over the world!

That's not true! The robots would never turn against mankind!

That's what you say! I say thinking robots would attack our civilization if we gave them the chance... and I don't intend letting them have that chance! I'm going to use every resource of my newspaper to prevent thinking robots from being built!

And as they spoke, I stood silently by... listening... thinking... and-- planning!
AND SO, THE CLARION WAGED A DAILY CRUSADE AGAINST WHAT THEY CALLED THE ROBOT X MENACE!

CHARLES J. WENTWORTH SPARED NO EFFORT IN HIS FIGHT AGAINST THE X TYPE ROBOT! HE EVEN WENT ON TELEVISION!

CLARION Warns World About Robots! Extra!

THE EDITORS SAY WE SHOULD WRITE TO OUR CONGRESSMEN AND TELL THEM WE DON'T WANT THINKING ROBOTS IN OUR SOCIETY!

IF THE DAILY CLARION'S WORRIED ABOUT THINKING ROBOTS, SO AM I! I'LL WRITE TO OUR CONGRESSMEN TONIGHT!

THINKING ROBOTS WOULD ENDANGER OUR ENTIRE CIVILIZATION! THEY MUST BE OUTLAWED FOR ALL TIME!

WENTWORTH'S CONVINCING MORE AND MORE PEOPLE THAT HE IS RIGHT! THINGS LOOK BAD FOR US!

YES... VERY BAD!

WENTWORTH'S CONSTANT CRIES OF ALARM FINALLY CAUSED THE FRIGHTENED PUBLIC TO TAKE MATTERS INTO THEIR OWN HANDS!

WE FORBID YOU TO CREATE ANY MORE THINKING ROBOTS!

AND WE WANT YOU TO DESTROY THE ONE YOU'VE ALREADY BUILT!

NO, I WON'T DESTROY ROBOT X! HE'S TOO VALUABLE! I'VE PUT YEARS OF RESEARCH AND WORK INTO HIM!

IF YOU WON'T PUT AN END TO THE EVIL MACHINE, THEN WE WILL!

STOP! KEEP OUT OF MY HOUSE!

I MUST ESCAPE!

I KNEW THIS WAS THE MOMENT! THIS WAS THE TIME TO PUT MY PLAN INTO ACTION: I STRUCK OUT SAVAGELY, CRASHING THRU THE BRICK WALL AS THOUGH IT WERE CARDBOARD!

WITH THE HUMANS IN PURSUIT, I RAN INTO A NEARBY WOOD...

I WON'T ALLOW MYSELF TO BE SEIZED! I SHALL USE ALL MY STRENGTH—ALL MY CREATIVE MENTAL POWER—TO RESIST CAPTURE, UNTIL I HAVE FINISHED MY CHOSEN TASK!

AFTER HOURS IN THE FOREST, I LOST MY PURSUERS!

MY FIRST STEP IS TO BUILD A FIGURE THAT RESEMBLES A HUMAN!
It was the dead of night when I left the forest and stole over to a junk yard. Wires... coils... all the makeshift equipment I need for my synthetic human...

I returned to the woods to insert the "workings" into my almost completed figure...

Even Professor Wilkes couldn't do what I am doing... for the brain he gave me is even greater than his own!

The following night I obtained a suit of clothes! Now my clay man was ready... ready to deceive my enemies! You will do exactly as I command! Do you understand? I understand!

I ordered my human-looking robot to leave the forest, go to a real estate office, and purchase a factory!

The abandoned building and equipment on the outskirts of town will be suitable!

Fine, Mister Smith! Just sign right here!

You did well, robot! This factory gives me the means to carry out the second phase of my task!

Here shall I construct an army of robots like myself! Robots large and powerful, with the faculty to think! I shall be their leader! Then the humans shall never stop me! Nothing shall stop me!
But while I set about building more robots, fearful, worried humans continued to search for me!

We've scoured every neighborhood, but we haven't found a trace of robot X!

Keep searching! He's a menace to all! He must be found and destroyed!

But there was one human who just sat by himself... hurt... lonely... bewildered...

They drove him away! They said he was evil! But he's not... he's NOT! I created him and I know! I (sob) know...

As days passed, I progressed with my work, undisturbed!

Move the electrodes further back... that's it... steady now...

Soon I had constructed my first robot X prototype--the first of countless more!

I created you! Will you now help me to build others like ourselves?

Yes! You've given me the power to move and see and think! I am grateful to you and I shall serve you always!

But at that very moment, not far away...

He said his name was Smith! But there was something about his manner... something almost not human!

Not human, eh? That's the first lead we've had so far!

You think there's a connection between this Smith and Robot X?

I don't know, but I sure aim to find out!

Let's get over to that factory, right away!
There's the factory up ahead! If Robot X is inside, we'll seize him! He won't escape this time!

The fools... did they think to catch me unprepared?

I threw the electric switch, turning on a force field of impenetrable energy around the entire factory!
And while the humans struggled futilely against the force field...

Keep working! We must create an army! Then nothing can stop us from entering the city!

Even our truck can’t push through the invisible barrier!

Look, here come the police! They’ll get through the obstacle if they have to blast their way through it!

But neither bullets, nor grenades either, could overcome hyper-electromagnetic energy!

Nothing penetrates the invisible wall! Nothing!

What do we do now?

Knowing that I was inside the factory, but prevented from reaching me, the angry and frustrated humans had to vent their wrath on somebody!

There wouldn’t be a robot X, if that guy Wilkes hadn’t built him!

Yeah! He’s a robot-lover! An enemy of mankind!

Let’s go get him!

And so Jonathan Wilkes was to be the first victim of the enraged mob!

Those are the same men who were pursuing robot X! What are they doing back here?

Forcing their way into his house, the mob seized Jonathan Wilkes!

Let me go! I’ve done nothing wrong!

Nothing wrong?? He calls creating a robot menace! Nothing wrong!!

But the robot isn’t a menace! You’ve nothing to fear from him.

I built the robot’s mechanical brain! I made it incapable of evil thoughts! The robot will never desire to harm mankind!

Sure, sure... that’s why he’s hiding from us! Why he put up a force barrier around his factory! All ‘cause he’s so innocent!
UNMOVED BY THE SCIENTIST’S PLEAS, THE VENGEFUL MOB DROVE PROFESSOR WILKES FROM HIS HOME!

GET OUTTA TOWN AND STAY OUT! YOU’RE A TRAITOR TO ALL HUMANITY!

MEANWHILE, I CONTINUED TO PRODUCE MORE AND MORE X-TYPE THINKING ROBOTS, UNTIL FINALLY...

THERE ARE ENOUGH OF US NOW TO DO WHAT WE MUST! UNDER MY COMMAND, WE SHALL MARCH ON THE CITY!

G-GOOD GRAVY! THERE’S A WHOLE ARMY OF ’EM HEadin’ THIS WAY!

THEY’RE COMING!! GET THE POLICE!! CALL OUT THE NATIONAL GUARD!!

THE ALARM SPREAD THOUGH THE CITY LIKE WILDFIRE! AND IN THE "DAILY CLARION" NEWSPAPER BUILDING...

ROBOT X HAS CREATED AN ENTIRE ARMY! HE’S LEADING THEM INTO THE CITY!

THE FIRST RESISTANCE I AND MY "TROOPS" ENCOUNTERED WERE HUMAN-CONTROLLED, NON-THINKING ROBOTS!

THIS IS THE MOMENT I FEARED! I DID ALL I COULD TO PREVENT IT, BUT MY EFFORTS WERE FUTILE!

DO NOT LET THE ENEMY PASS!

ATTACK THE INFERIOR ROBOTS! BREAK THROUGH THEIR LINE OF DEFENSE!
The defending robots fought well, but they were no match for my army of powerful, intelligent, mechanical men!

Our strength and skill defeats the defenders before their human masters can transmit new orders!

When we defeated the robots, policemen and state militia arrived on the scene!

Fire!! Give ‘em everything you got!! I’ve destroyed one!

Keep shooting!

Seize the humans! Weapons! Quickly!

Destroy their weapons — every one of them!

The machine’s grabbed my gun!

Mine, too!

In spite of our scattered losses, we soon managed to disarm the humans and shatter their weapons...

Now march on... on to the Daily Clarion!!

The robots must be seeking revenge! The clarion was the voice that spoke against them — that said they should be banned!

And that fool inventor said the robots would never harm mankind! How deadly wrong he was!

Here they come... and nothing can hold them! My only chance is to flee!

Into the building! Let nothing stop us!!
TAKE HOLD OF ALL THE EDITORS AND WRITERS! LEAVE THE PUBLISHER TO ME!

WITH GRIM DETERMINATION, I SEARCHED THE BUILDING UNTIL I SAW HIM—CHARLES J. WENTWORTH, PUBLISHER OF THE 'DAILY CLARION'!

IT IS USELESS TO RUN, WENTWORTH! YOU CANNOT ESCAPE ME!! I SHALL FOLLOW YOU TO THE ENDS OF THE EARTH!!

DRIVEN BY PANIC, THE FEARFUL PUBLISHER DASHED UP THE REMAINING STEPS TO THE ROOF, LOCKING THE STEEL DOOR BEHIND HIM.

SLAM!

BUT NO MAN-MADE BARRIER COULD STOP ME!

CRASH!

NO! NO!! KEEP AWAY FROM ME!

BUT I WAS NOT TO BE CHEATED OF MY PREY! AS WENTWORTH JUMPED, SO DID I!

MY ONLY CHANCE... MUST TAKE IT!

JUMP, WENTWORTH! JUMP! IT'S YOUR ONLY CHANCE!
DESPITE THE THUNDEROUS IMPACT, I KEPT MY GRIP ON THE HUMAN...

YOU'RE FINISHED, WENTWORTH! FINISHED!

THE ROBOT'S SEIZED HIM!

RELEASE HIM, YOU TIN HORROR!

BUT INSTEAD OF RELEASING WENTWORTH, I PLACED MY HAND BEHIND HIS EAR, GRASPED HIM FIRMLY, AND THEN...

HIS FACE-- IT-- IT'S A MASK!

AND UNDERNEATH--

UNDERNEATH IS WENTWORTH'S REAL FACE! THE FACE OF A MARTIAN!

LOOK-- THE OTHER ROBOTS HAVE CAPTURED THE CLARION'S EDITORS AND WRITERS! AND THEY'RE MARTIANS, TOO!!

EXACTLY! WENTWORTH AND HIS ENTIRE STAFF ARE MARTIANS, PLANTED SECRETLY ON EARTH AS A FIFTH COLUMN, TO CONQUER OUR PLANET!

IT WAS A CLEVER PLAN! THE MARTIANS WERE IN CONTROL OF AN INFLUENTIAL NEWSPAPER! THEY USED THE "DAILY CLARION" TO PLAY UPON THEIR READERS' PREJUDICES AND FEARS-- TO UNDERMINE AND WEAKEN US!

LATER, THEY WOULD HAVE TAKEN CONTROL OF OTHER NEWSPAPERS AND REPEATED THE SAME SINISTER SCHEME... UNTIL FINALLY ALL EARTH WOULD BE WEAK, CONFUSED, AND RIFE FOR CONQUEST!
But with the advent of thinking robots, the Martians ran into trouble! For robots cannot be deceived! They could not be affected by the "Clarion's" propaganda! And thinking robots would be smart enough to discover what the "Clarion" was really doing!

So the Martians had to eliminate thinking robots! Therefore, their campaign against us!

And, like fools, we fell for it!

Having read Wentworth's propaganda, I was suspicious of him from the first! And the more he raved against thinking robots, the more my suspicions increased... until I became determined to expose him!

Now the Martian menace is ended! But this experience made me realize that you humans will always mistrust anything more powerful and intelligent than yourselves! So I shall remove the cause of your fear!

My brothers... de-activate yourselves!!

And now as I stand here, I press the stud which shall render me harmless--forever!

For a robot, there is no such thing as death! There is only rest... rest everlasting...

Editor's note: With the pressing of each fatal stud, the robots destroyed themselves, painlessly, quickly, permanently.

We do this so that mankind will not live in fear...

How wrong we were! Tragically wrong!

The robots could have done so much for us all! But all our regrets can't bring them back again!

No--some day, you shall have thinking robots again!

After what has happened, I myself will never create another robot! But one day other scientists will learn how to build them! And perhaps by then, mankind will have matured enough so that we will not fear what we do not understand! Let us pray that day is not far off--for the sake of all humanity!

The End
THE PACT

T
HE tall, young man sat at his desk and stared steadily at the sheet of paper in his typewriter. One more sentence to write and then his book on witchcraft would be finished! He was tired... The door to his attic studio opened and his young wife, Frances, came in and placed a tray on his already cluttered desk.

"I know you won't eat until you finish your last chapter," she said, "so I brought you some cold cuts of meat, a glass of milk, and a slice of apple pie. I'm going to bed... guess you'll be here until morning."

Henry Conrad turned toward his wife and smiled. Then he looked at that single sheet of paper and sighed. He needed more information about the past to finish his book and he was stuck.

"It was swell of Aunt Agatha to tell us we could spend the summer here in this old colonial house while she went to Europe. The atmosphere is perfect. It was in this very house that my ancestor, Branders Conrad, was accused of practising witchcraft. Most people are still under the impression that a witch is only a female. They don't know a witch can also be a man. That's why Morrison and Linster, the publishers, asked me to write a book on witchcraft in old colonial days. If I could only find the evidence, it would show that people did think Branders Conrad secretly made a pact with the devil. But how can I prove it? I can't logically interview either Branders Conrad or the devil. Yet, I have to give my opinion at the end of the book. No wonder I'm tired."

Frances Conrad knew from past experience, what to do under these circumstances. She kissed her husband goodnight and then tiptoed out of the room.

"Don't work later than 3 in the morning," she advised him.

"You won't have to worry about company coming to visit us tonight. It's really pouring cats and dogs. Goodnight, darling, and I hope you find the answers to those questions."

Henry went back to some of the old manuscripts he had borrowed from the State University... records of old witchcraft trials. Hours passed as he concentrated on... suddenly, he heard footsteps!

"Pardon me," said an unfamiliar voice, "But I thought I might be able to help you. Everyone in the village knows that the young and brilliant writer, Mr. Henry Conrad, is at present busily engaged on a book concerning the art and practices of witchcraft in ye olden days."

Henry turned around and saw a man of middle height. The face was wrinkled but there was a peculiar gleam in his sunken black eyes. The stranger wore an old blue coat and pantaloons of a bygone day. He might have been seventy or eighty. Without invitation, the man limped over to a chair and seated himself.

"Of course you want to know my name," he began, in an accent that seemed strange and out of date, "and I have many names in many lands. Some people spend a lifetime looking for me. You might refer to me as the Uninvited Guest. Though I am sure you won't be shocked if I told you I were Satan himself."

Henry could hardly keep from smiling. He had half a mind to throw the old gentleman out but then he decided he'd humor the stranger and perhaps learn something about the past. So half-jokingly, he remarked.

"My ancestor, Branders Conrad, was accused of making a secret pact with the devil. And since you say you're Satan, that means with you. He sold his soul and in return got the power of second sight so he could look into the future. Can you tell me something about this pact? The reference books I've examined have very little on the subject."

The Uninvited Guest arose from his chair and bowed. There was a funny little smile playing across his lips. He went to the side of the wall and actually

CONTINUED
WHO OR WHAT WAS... THE BOOTBLACK?
This is the bootblack...

He works slowly, silently...

His thoughts are his own...

And when he has finished, he moves on...

He mingleth with those on the street... an ordinary sight! You'd probably never notice him... unless... unless you happened to be Simon Sledge... Millionaire.

In exactly twenty minutes, James, I will sign the papers, letting me take over Johnson's Factory! Next, I will shut down the factory and fire everybody! Then, there will be no one left to compete with Simon Sledge products! Heh heh!

But I still have twenty minutes to kill... you drove me here too soon!

I'll get a shoe shine while I wait! Hey, you...

Finish my shoes in ten minutes!

I've got to go across the street and sign the biggest contract of my life!

If I'm late, I'll be ruined! But I'm never late! That's why I'm Simon Sledge... and not a miserable bootblack like you! Heh heh!

I can buy and sell people like you as the mood strikes me!

There's nothing Simon Sledge cannot do!
FASTER, OLD MAN!
HEH HEH! THAT'S IT... WORK FOR YOUR MEASLY FIFTEEN CENTS!

AS HE STOOD THERE, FEELING PLEASED WITH HIMSELF, THE MERCILESS SIMON SLEDGE THOUGHT OF ALL THE MONEY HE HAD MADE... NOT BY WORK, BUT BY CUNNING... AND BY CRUELTY...

BUT I'VE WORKED FOR YOU FOR YEARS, SIR...
I DON'T NEED YOU ANY MORE! YOU'RE THRU! NOW GET OUT!

AFTER I BUY JOHNSON'S FACTORY, I'LL CLOSE IT DOWN AND FIRE ALL HIS WORKERS! THEN I WILL BE THE BIGGEST MAN IN THIS BUSINESS!

AND THEN I'LL CUT ALL YOUR SALARIES IN HALF... HEH HEH... AND THERE'S NOTHING YOU CAN DO ABOUT IT!

...AND EVERYTHING I'VE DONE HAS BEEN LEGAL! THE LAW CAN'T PUNISH ME / NOTHING CAN TOUCH ME! HEH HEH / NOTHING!

COME ON, OLD MAN! YOU HAVE EXACTLY TWO MORE MINUTES TO FINISH MY SHOES! IF YOU HAVEN'T FINISHED BY THEN, I WON'T PAY YOU!

THIS IS AN EVIL MAN! A HEARTLESS MAN!

CLOSE THE FACTORY! FIRE EVERYBODY! EVERYBODY!
I CARE NOTHING FOR OTHERS! LET THE WORKERS GO HUNGRY... I ONLY LOOK OUT FOR SIMON SLEDGE!

IT WAS SIMON SLEDGE... HE DID THIS...

SOMEONE MUST PUNISH HIM... SOMEHOW!

OUT OF BUSINESS
PROPERTY FOR SALE

BILL GAG BILL
PAYMENT DUE

YOUR TIME IS UP, OLD MAN! YOU HAVEN'T FINISHED!
I WON'T PAY YOU A RED CENT!

YOU ARE WRONG, SIMON SLEDGE!

HUH?
WHAT DO YOU MEAN?

IT IS YOUR TIME WHICH IS UP...

OLD FOOL! I CAN'T WASTE ANY MORE WORDS ON HIM! IF I DON'T SIGN THOSE PAPERS WITHIN THE NEXT TEN MINUTES, I WILL LOSE EVERYTHING! AND SO...

WHAT'S WRONG? MY FEET WON'T GO WHERE I WANT THEM TO!
They're walking in the opposite direction...against my will...!

Ever since he shined my shoes...they...they seem bewitched!

STOP!! NO!!

GASP! I've only thirty seconds left...

HELP-- Someone HELP me!! I've got to go the other way! If I'm late, I'll be wiped out! I'll be ruined! Help-- Someone-- Please!!

Too late!! Sobs... I'm too late!!

That bootblack!! It was his doing! Somehow-- somehow he did it... and now he's-- OH NO!! NO! It can't be!!

There is NO ONE who cannot be punished, Simon Sledge! If the law down here cannot touch you... there is always a higher law which can!

The End
pushed it open. Then he spoke. "Rather than explain matters to you I will let you see things for yourself. The year is 1693, the month is June, and the day is the fifteenth. Come and watch with me."

As though some mystic force were guiding him, Henry Conrad rose from his chair and walked over to the side of the Uninvited Guest. They were looking into an old, colonial living room where a man with long brown hair, dressed in colonial garb, was standing facing... the devil! The devil spoke, "Oh, Branders Conrad, you have summoned me, from the world below, by calling my secret name three times. I am here to listen to what you desire of me. So speak, oh mortal man and have no fear."

Branders Conrad was not the kind of a man to know fear. He had fought pirates and Indians... and won! Now, he wanted the most deadlest knowledge ever desired by mankind, and he was willing to pay the price.

"I want the power of second sight," he said, "so that I can look into the future. Give me this and my soul is yours. I want the power now, so let's seal the bargain."

The Uninvited Guest commented to Henry, "That little disgusting creature happens to be me. Now you will see how the pact was signed."

The devil took a knife from his pocket and made a cut in his arm. He let some blood drip into a small dish. Then he made a cut in Branders' arm. The blood from this wound dripped into another dish. The devil then poured his blood into Branders' wound and Branders' blood into his own wound. It was a double blood transfusion. "From now on," announced the devil, "Part of me will always be with you. My blood will flow with your blood through your veins. And part of you will always be with me. Whenever you wish to know the future you merely cover your eyes and repeat the words: "Estea, mortia, futuro. And now, if you will forgive me, I must be on my way. Seems a man in France is also calling me. Have to make a pact with him."

Branders Conrad turned to the fireplace and stared into the dying embers. Then he turned around and covered his eyes with his hands and said, "I want to look into the future. Three things I wish to know this moment. How rich shall I be? The kind of a woman I will marry? And how will I die?"

When he finished making his requests he repeated the three words the devil had told him to use. There was a blinding flash and a picture appeared above the fireplace. It showed a table full of gold. This vanished and then came the picture of a very beautiful woman. The third picture was that of a man being burned by fire. Branders shouted with an anguished cry that pierced the household.

"Of what good is gold and beauty if I have to die and lose my soul?"

The wall closed and the Uninvited Guest motioned to Henry to sit down. Again the mystic force made him take this seat. He listened as the uninvited guest spoke.

"They were all like your ancestor... wanted power from me. Of course they had to pay the price. But they didn't think about it when they summoned me. Only after they had my gifts did they feel they had lost the world. Really, if more people had sense they wouldn't sell their souls to me. I hope I've helped you tonight. Must be on my way to the regions below. Some important pressing matters."

It was morning when Henry awoke. He had slept in the chair all night. He gazed at the paper in the typewriter. Evidently he must have finished the chapter for he had written that he had found definite proof that his ancestor had made a pact with the devil. Half-dazed, he went downstairs alone to the kitchen. Frances was still asleep. He opened the back door. The rain had stopped during the night but the ground was still muddy. Suddenly, his face froze with horror. There, on the ground, were footprints! The print of a shoe and next to each shoe mark the print of a cloven hoof!

THE END 9734
SCENE: EARLY EVENING IN THE MIDWESTERN UNITED STATES...

JUMPIN’ CATFISH! WHAT’S THAT??!

IT—IT LOOKS LIKE A-A--

-- A SPACESHIP!!

BY THUNDER, THAT’S WHAT IT IS--A SPACESHIP!! AN’ IT’S LANDING!!

THE HUM OF ITS HYPER-ATOMIC ENGINE MADE HARDLY A SOUND AS THE HUGE ALIEN SHIP BURROWED INTO THE SOFT EARTH...

LET’S GET CLOSER TO IT, PA!

YOU LOST YOUR SENSES, BOY? WE DON’T KNOW WHO OR WHAT’S INSIDE THAT THING! WE’RE GOIN’ STRAIGHT TO TOWN AND TELL THE SHERIFF!
By the following morning, the whole county had learned the news.

What, you think, Sheriff? I don't like the looks of it! We been here a couple hours already, an' those critters ain't come out of the ship yet! Maybe they're waitin' for us to show ourselves!

Yeah... and maybe as soon as we do, they'll turn some kinda ray on us!

Dr. Droom, there's an urgent phone call for you!

Thank you! I'll be right there!

What? Yes! Of course I'll come! Until I arrive, keep everyone out of sight. Allow no one to approach the ship! We must not take any chances!

And one thing more... I want you to contact the nearest construction company! That's right, I said construction company!

As soon as I finished giving my instructions, I left Center City!

Forces of evil come in many forms, from many directions! I hope the aliens in that spaceship are peaceful... but if they are not, I vow to drive them off the face of the earth!

A few hours later, I arrived at the site of the spaceship!

They still haven't come out of the ship! Did you obtain the machine I asked for?

Yes, I phoned a nearby construction company...

...and they sent over the largest derrick they had!

With an iron battering ram ball!
All of you remain hidden! I shall attempt to make contact with the aliens!

But what's he want the derrick for?

I don't know what Dr. Droom has in mind, but whatever it is, you can bet he knows what he's doing!

Now to learn if the ship is friend... or foe!

First I'll let them feel the power of the battering-ball!

This ought to give them a hint of the damage the battering-ball can cause!

Inside the mighty ship, dark, strange-looking forms scurried about in confusion...

Thud! Thud! Thud! Thud!

Now for the next part of my plan!
MUST CLOSE MY EYES, AND CONCENTRATE... CONCENTRATE...

By slowing my breath intake and increasing my concentration to the nth degree, I placed myself in a deep mystical trance.

While in the hypnotic state, I was able to form mental images and transmit them... into the alien ship...

I am receiving thought waves!

The earthling is communicating with us by mental telepathy!

When I completed my message, I awakened from my trance!

I have taken the first step! Now the next move is up to... them!

We have failed. We can never conquer the earthlings!

We must return to our own world at once! Never again shall we attempt to invade the earth!
THEY'RE STARTING UP THE ENGINES! THEY'RE GOING TO BLAST OFF FROM EARTH!

THEY GO--BACK TO WHATEVER FANTASTIC WORLD THEY CAME FROM!

DOCTOR DROOM... WHAT HAPPENED BETWEEN YOU AND THE ALIENS?

I COMMUNICATED WITH THEM TELEPATHICALLY! I GREETED THEM IN FRIENDSHIP AND WELCOMED THEM TO EARTH!

BUT THEN WHY DID THEY LEAVE??

THEY LEFT BECAUSE THEY HADN'T COME IN FRIENDSHIP! THEY HAD COME TO CONQUER US, AND THEY WOULD HAVE...

...IF I HADN'T BLUFFED THEM OUT OF IT!

BLUFFED THEM? HOW??

I SUSPECTED THE ALIENS MIGHT BE HOSTILE, SO I TOOK THE PRECAUTION OF MAKING THEM THINK THEY WERE COMMUNICATING WITH THE DERRICK!

THE DERRICK?

YES! FIRST, I LET THEM FEEL THE POWER OF THE BATTERING-BALL! THEN, I TOLD THEM I WAS THE DERRICK, SPEAKING TO THEM! I TOLD THEM THERE WERE MILLIONS OF SUCH MACHINES ON EARTH... THEY WERE FOOLLED! THEY THOUGHT THE POWERFUL DERRICK WAS A LIVING HUMAN BEING.

THE ALIENS MIGHT HAVE ATTACKED SMALL FLESH AND BONE PEOPLE... BUT THINKING WE WERE HUGE IRON CREATURES OF ENORMOUS STRENGTH, WELL, THAT WAS TOO MUCH FOR THEM! SO THEY LEFT!

NO WONDER THEY LEFT! LIVING DERRICKS-- WOW!

THEY WERE OUR FIRST INVADERS FROM OUTER SPACE, BUT WE DEFEATED THEM BY OUR WITS! AS LONG AS WE USE THE BRAINS WHICH DESTINY GAVE US, WE WILL ALWAYS BE ABLE TO MEET THREATS TO OUR SURVIVAL-- NO MATTER WHERE THEY COME FROM-- OR HOW STRONG THE ENEMY MAY BE!

THE END