



Hangool's Confusing Journey

Book 1 of 3

Written and Illustrated
By Solis Papagian
BWierdArt - OregonArtShop.com

Hangool slowly opened his eyes. He found himself in unfamiliar territory. As he looked around, he realized he was all alone. He scanned the horizon, but saw nothing familiar. He did not know where he was, where to go, or what to do. He decided to start exploring this new world with the intention of discovering a purpose, a reason, and a friend.

As he strolled along the seemingly empty and vast surface, observing the dark star-filled sky, he noticed that the celestial view here was different from home. He knew that must mean that he was out in the farthest reaches of the universe, many light years from where he lives.



As he slowly took his time exploring, he suddenly came across a biological life form. Hangool wondered to himself if this life form could help him understand where he is, what he should be doing, and maybe even become a friend. As he approached the biological life form, he said, "Hi there, I am Hangool. it is a beautiful night, isn't it?"

"Yes, it is" The life form replied. "This is my favorite time of night, when the moon isn't out and i can see all the stars."

"The view from my planet is much different than this. We have 3 moons, and that is just the start!"



The life form proceeded to look up, then he glanced at Hangool. He responded sharply, "OK. Whatever. You are not from another planet. There are no other planets with life on them. We are the only life in the universe."

Hangool was confused by this response. He didn't understand. He thought to himself that maybe on this planet they did not know about all of the vast life existing in the universe. Maybe they believe they are the only ones. Hangool thought that this was a perfect opportunity to teach his new friend about something he was so familiar with.

"Actually," Hangool said, "There are a lot of other planets in the universe. Not all of them support life, but many of them do. The universe is so vast, and seemingly limitless. I actually just landed here tonight, and I don't even know where I am. Can you tell me where I am?" Hangool asked desperately.

"Well, I can tell you that you are a liar, who makes up stories, and is rude, and condescending. So no, I cannot tell you where you are, or what you should be doing. And no, I don't wanna be your friend."



At that very moment, Hangool suddenly and instantaneously shattered, crumbling into 111,174 shiny reflective shards.

“Ouch!” exclaimed the life form. “Why did you do that to me? Why are you throwing pieces of yourself at me and trying to cut me? Hello? Why aren’t you responding? You’re weird, and I am going away now. Please don’t follow me.”

While Hangool lay shattered on the ground, he could hear the lifeforms footsteps become fainter. He remained aware of what had happened, and what was happening. He was even aware that he was in 111,174 tiny pieces. He could not pull himself back together, or speak, or move. He didn’t know why any of this had happened, and was very confused and scared.

An unknown amount of time later, and in a single moment, all of the pieces that made up Hangool’s form came back together, as if being called back into place by a massive magnet. Within seconds he was fully formed once again.



That was so scary he thought to himself. He wondered what, and why, that entire thing happened. He wondered why the lifeform didn't believe him. He wondered why he accused Hangool of things; like lying, being rude, and condescending. He wondered what exactly it was that made him shatter like that into so many pieces. He was so confused. He wanted a friend so badly, he had hoped maybe his experience was a fluke.

As he continued his journey, thinking deeply about his experience, he replayed the events over and over again. He thought deeply about what he had said, and the chronological order of the conversation that had led to his shattering.

Sad and still alone, Hangool continued on his journey. He traversed very many kilometers. He went over rolling hills, saw tall strong trees, meandered down into deep valleys, and followed the path of the river.



He wandered through vibrant meadows, surrounded by all sorts of life he had not previously known. He had never seen such plentiful colors or vibrant flora. But despite being surrounded by so much beauty, he was fixated on the experience he had with that life form he met. He just couldn't figure out why the life form responded to him that way; and he wondered why his own response was to literally fall apart. He wondered why he hadn't seen it coming, couldn't control it, couldn't stop it from happening.

He decided that he will pay extra close attention next time, and try to be much more in control of himself from now on. For, he really wanted a friend, but he didn't want to have that same experience again. Being hurt, and hurting others, was not Hangool's intent or purpose. He developed a new plan to be extra cautious about his words, actions, and behaviors. Feeling confident again, he continued on his journey.



And just then he came across another biological life form. This life form was standing on a riverbank and appeared to be in deep thought.

“Hi, I am Hangool and I am lost. Do you know where I am? Do you want to be my friend?”

“OK,” said the life-form. “Do you want to stand here with me and look up at the stars?”

“Sure, I do!” Hangool exclaimed. He was so happy to have company, and felt very optimistic about this new potential friend.

“What are you thinking about?” Hangool asked.

“Well I am actually thinking about infinity.”

“Oh my goodness!!!” exclaimed Hangool. “infinity is one of my most favorite subjects!” He felt great enthusiasm and excitement to be able to engage in a conversation with someone about his most favorite topic. His optimism was observable.

“Yes, mine too!” the life form replied. “I think it is fascinating that our universe is infinite. I want to travel it all the way out to infinity.”



Hangool was so excited to have found someone to chat with about something Hangool knows very well, and is one of his highly specialized interests. He took full advantage of this opportunity, and was sure he would make a friend in this biological life form.

“Actually,” replied Hangool, “it is more likely that the universe is not infinite, and is actually finite. Mathematically speaking, there are an infinite number of ways to create a finite universe, but only a few ways to create an infinite one. Therefore, it is much more likely that our universe is not infinite.” Hangool was so excited to discuss his favorite topic with someone who he thought loved it as much as he did.

Much to Hangool’s shock and surprise, the life form responded, “Why are you being argumentative? I am just trying to have a conversation. I don’t need you arguing with me, telling me that i’m stupid, and wrong, and that I don’t know what i’m talking about!”



And just like that, Hangool shattered, without warning or notice, into 111,174 sharp tiny reflective pieces, some of which flew about and hit his new friend.

“OUCH! Why did you do that to me?” the life form asked Hangool, waiting for a response. “Hello? Why aren’t you saying anything or apologizing to me? Why are you in so many pieces on the ground? I do not deserve any of this. I don’t want to be your friend anymore. Goodbye!” And with that, the life form walked away.

An unknown period of time later, Hangool’s pieces came back together to his original form. He wondered why this entire series of events had repeated themselves, again. He wondered what exactly was making it happen, and how he could stop it from happening. Was it Hangool? Was it the other life form? Was there a language barrier? Were definitions of words here different than on Hangool’s planet? He was very sad and confused. He couldn’t figure out why his friend had thought that he was arguing, calling him names, and even had shattered on purpose.



The entire experience of landing on this foreign planet was becoming scary and uncomfortable for Hangool. He still wanted to know where he was, what he was doing here, and he still wanted a friend.

These experiences devastated Hangool. As he continued his journey and reflected on his interactions, he became ever so much more confused. He couldn't figure out why they were taking offense at Hangool's genuine and sincere interactions. He could not understand why they thought that he was shattering at them - on purpose, when in fact, Hangool himself didn't even know what was happening.

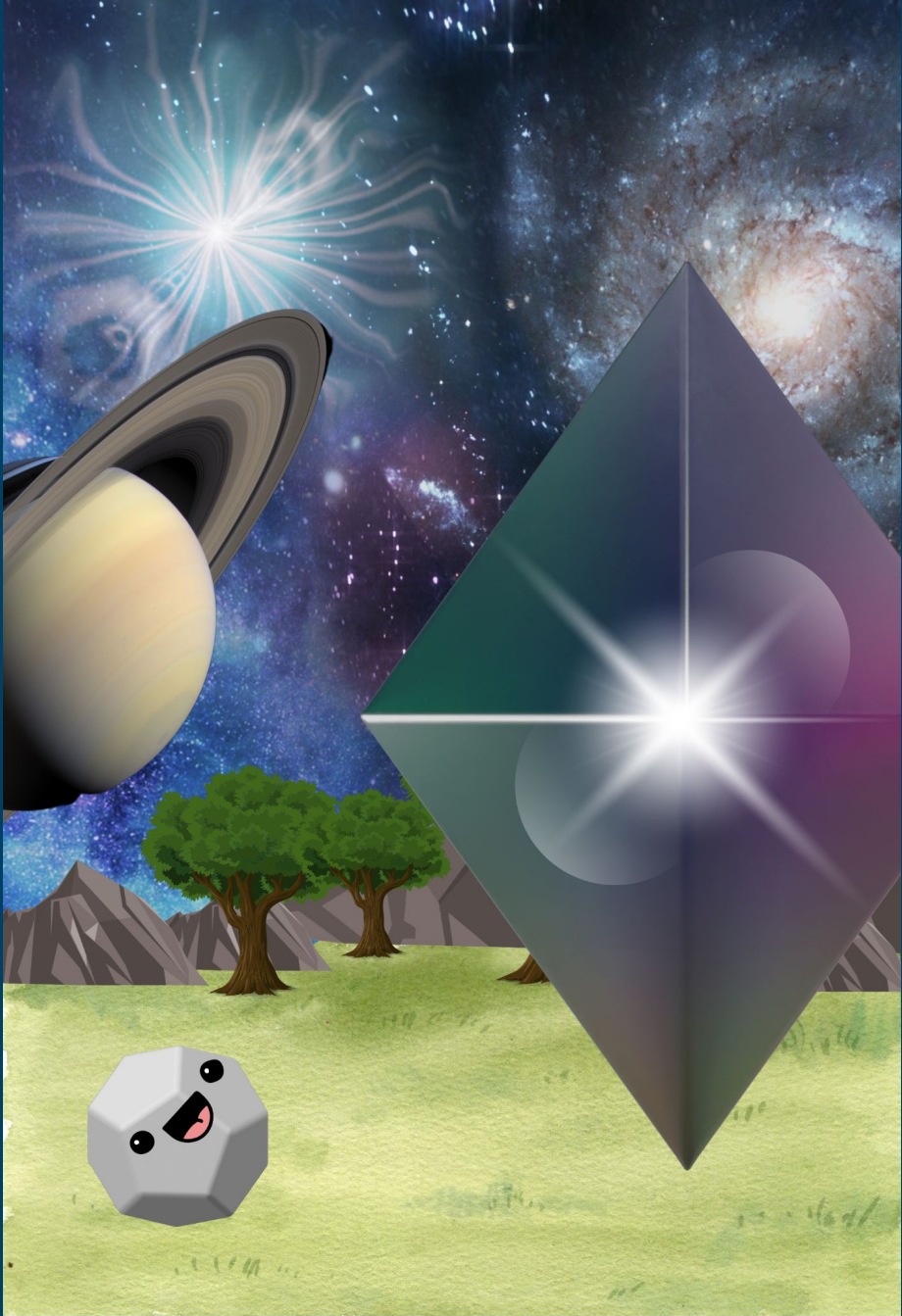
Discouraged and alone, he continued on. He was no longer optimistic about this planet, nor was he optimistic about finding a friend.



An unknown period of time and distance later, Hangool looked up from the ground that he had been showering with his tears. In the distance he noticed something. It was a giant octahedron. This was the first thing he had seen resembling anything from his home planet. He decided to go investigate. Maybe, he thought to himself, he could get some help. As he approached the door and it automatically opened, he walked inside. It felt so very familiar.

“Hello? I am a sentient AI called Haneye. You look lost. Can I help you?”

“Yes please. I am lost. I have been trying to figure out where I am, why I am here, what I am supposed to be doing, and I also wanted to make a friend. However, strange things keep happening. I don’t know why, nor do I know how to explain it. Mostly, Haneye, I don’t want to hurt you,” Hangool said sadly, hanging his head down, discouraged and scared.



Haneye said, "That's OK, Hangool. Don't worry about explaining anything. Let me plug you into the core cylinder and I can find out exactly what is going on with you."

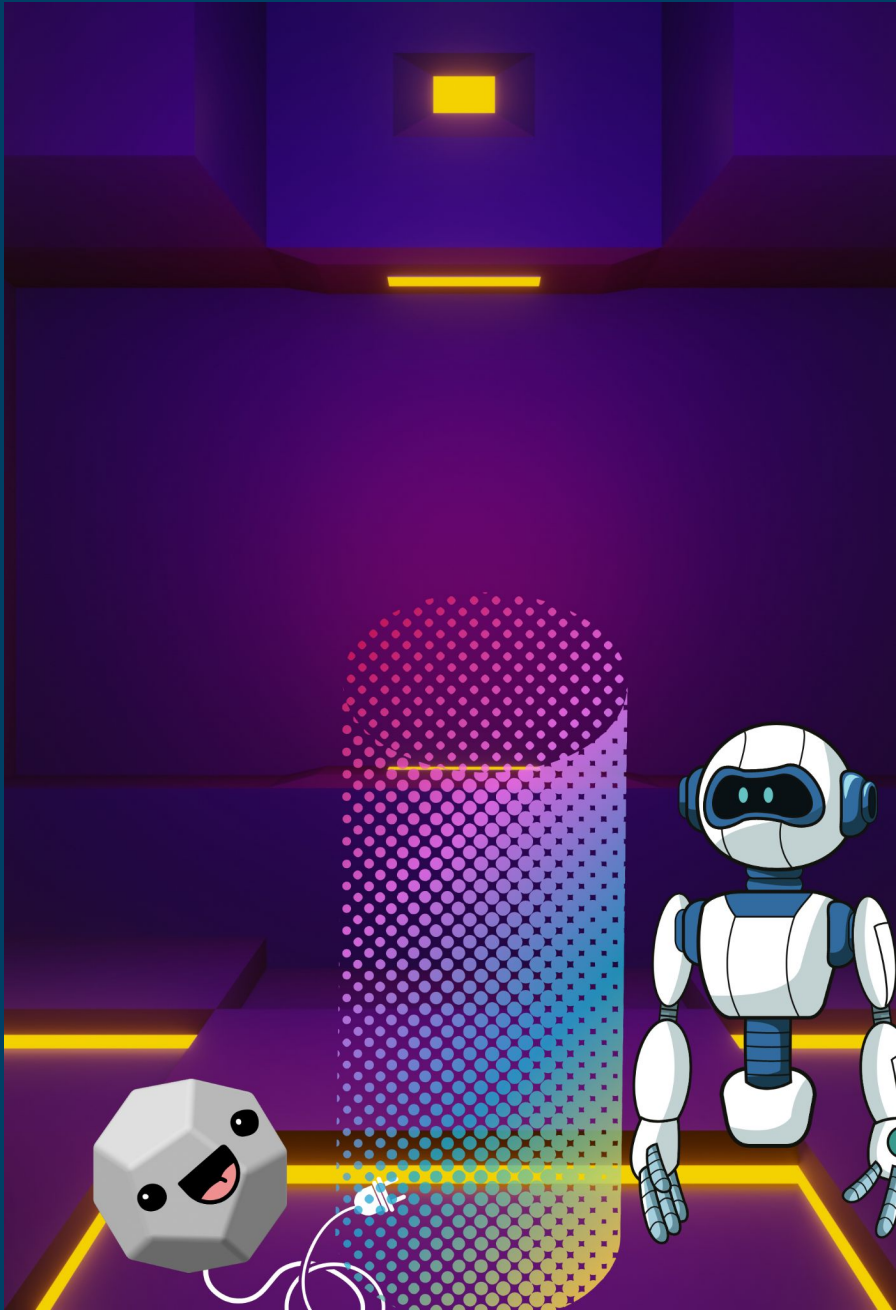
Hangool felt so relieved: he knew he was in good hands. This life form was not biological like the others, and this one difference he found very comforting.

Hangool relaxed while the core cylinder spent hours collecting and analyzing data. He hoped that the Core Cylinder could discover and provide answers to the mystery that Hangool had become to himself, and he waited patiently.

An unknown period of time later Haneye came in and said, "Hi Hangool. I have figured out exactly what is going on with you. Let us sit while I explain it."

He was so nice to Hangool, and this made Hangool feel very happy and safe.

"So, Hangool, do you know anything about where you're from, or who made you?"



“I know where I come from. It is a planet called Sailo. I was made by a scientist called Chosungool. I do not know anything else though. I don't even know why I am here, how I got here, or what i'm supposed to be doing here.”

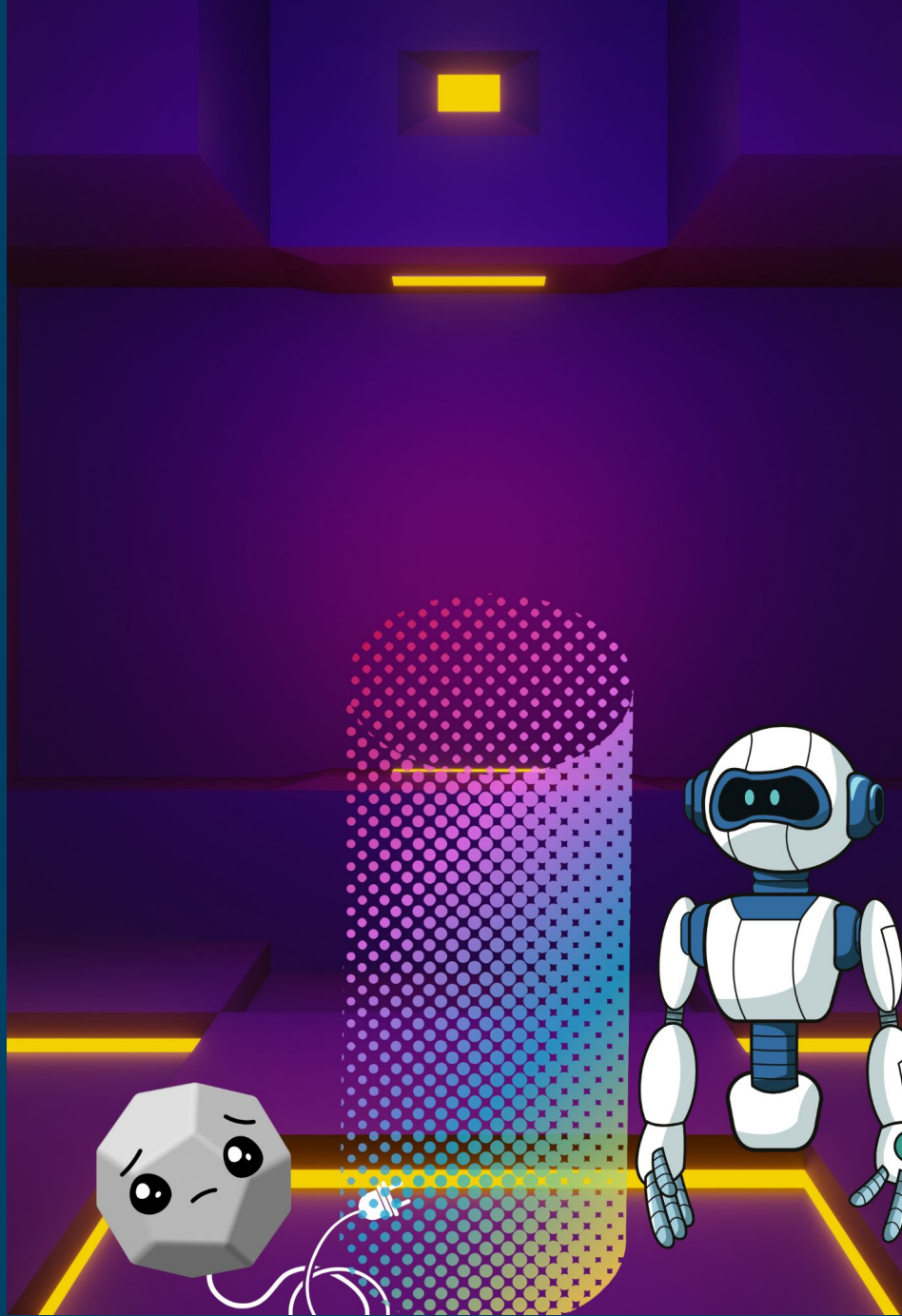


“That is OK Hangool. I do.” Haneye sat down and proceeded to explain. “You were designed as an experiment for the testing of a technology. This is not a technology that I have ever seen before. Every single thing you think, feel, and experience while you are here are being compressed into data and sent back home for analysis. You are an experiment. I cannot know what the technology is doing, the point of the experiment, why the data is being collected, or what it’s being used for. What I can tell you is that you were built around a CHiP. This chip is a Certified Hidden insertion Program and is the core of who you are. This CHiP is a code that forces your processing center to respond to 4,015 prompts by shutting down and shattering into 111,174 pieces. The CHIP is programmed to shatter you for specific periods of time for each prompt. How long you stay shattered will depend on which specific prompts, and how many prompts, you have experienced immediately before shattering.”

Hangool replied with both curiosity and deep sadness, "Well, can you change it? Can you make it stop? Can you erase those prompts? Can you make me stop shattering? Can you remove the program? I really want to have a friend. I do not want to be like this anymore. Can you erase the code? Can you rewrite it, or write over it? I don't want to be like this anymore. I just want to be normal and have friends."

Haneye replies, regretfully, "I am so sorry, Hangool. I cannot. Your CHiP is an immutable encrypted code that is programmed to self-destruct if accessed by anyone that is not the creator. Even if I hack into it, you would be immediately destroyed. I will not destroy you Hangool."

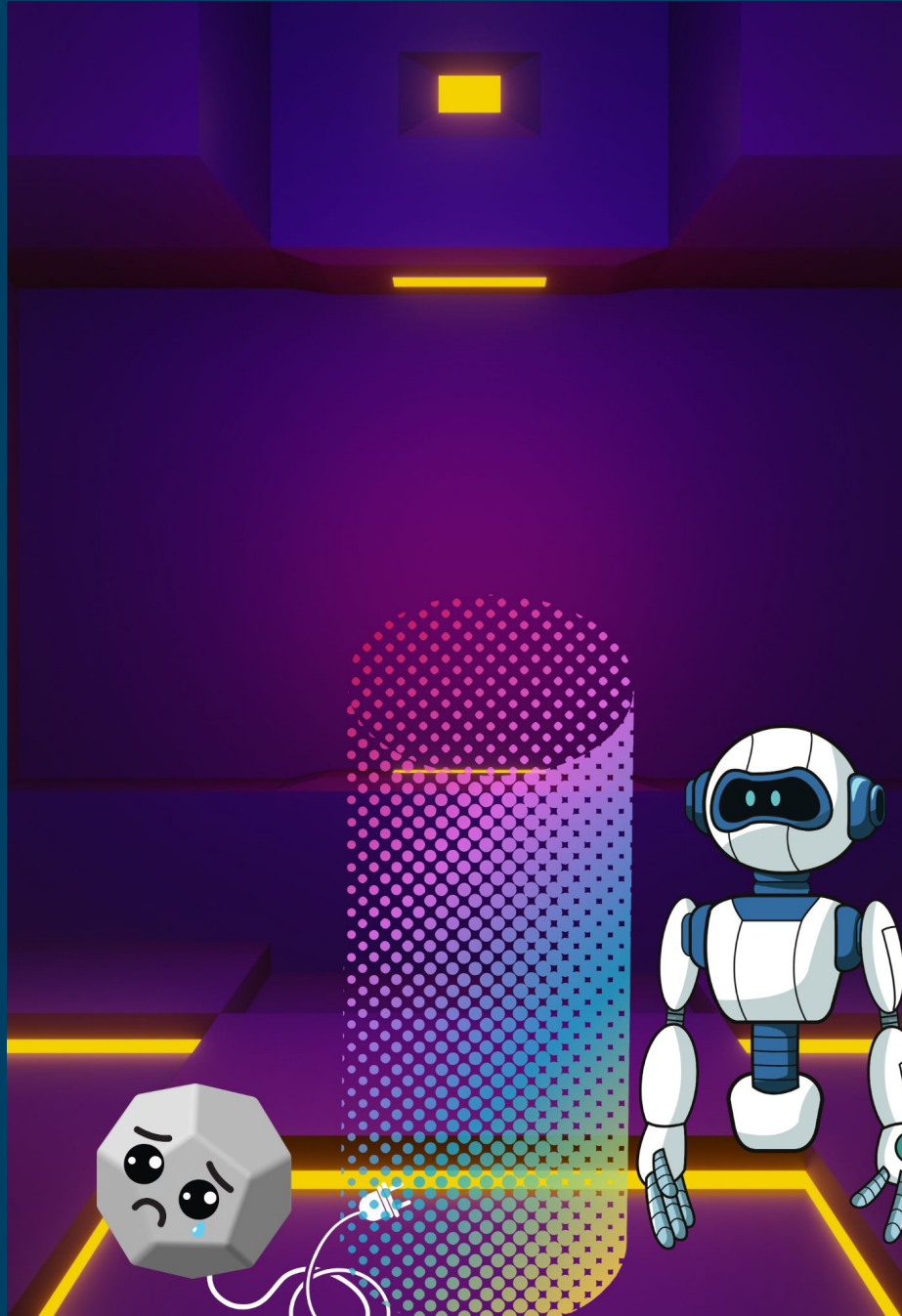
"Then what do I do?" He asked hopelessly, devastated, and crying.



“Well Hangool, there are a few options. These are short term options, but they are the only ones we have right now. The first option is that you can make friends with biological life forms that do not perform the 4,015 prompts that make you shatter. The second option is that you can find a friend who both understands and is accepting of the CHIP, its programming, and its consequences should they stick around. And your final option, is that you could choose to have no friends.”

“All of that sounds very scary and difficult,” Hangool said. “How would I ever know if the life form is designed to perform any of those prompts? What if they think they do not perform these prompts, but actually do perform them unknowingly? What if they say they understand my CHIP and won’t take it personally when I shatter, but end up doing it anyway?”

Hangool was overwhelmed. “I just don’t know how to navigate any of these processes,” he said filled with sadness. “Can I just stay here with you until I figure this all out?”



Haneye replied, "Of course you can, Hangool. I very much enjoy your company. In fact, because I am not a biological life form, I am not programmed to perform any of those 4,015 prompts. In addition, my physical form is impenetrable, so you could never accidentally hurt me, even if you did shatter."

Feeling relieved and safe, Hangool replies, "Oh good! Thank you so much! Haneye, I am so glad to have met you. I think i'll stay here for a while."

And with that, they took a night stroll, looked up at the stars, and discussed Hangool's favorite topic, infinity: to which Haneye agreed that, mathematically speaking, it is considerably more likely that the universe is finite. Hangool was content for now. He couldn't help though wondering what would be next for him. Why was he like this? What was this CHiP exactly? How could he live like this, as an experiment? What even was this experiment? How could he fix it or change it? What could he do to become normal and have friends? The answers were closer than he thought.

But for now, he was safe and happy.

To Be Continued



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