Carole Spearin Mc Cauley

SATIRE FOR MATHEMATICAL HUMAN

***   HELLO, I AM YOUR COMPUTER TERMINAL.

I want to build a robot to do things I never have time for. It should
      have SIX arms and FOUR legs.
***   LET'S ALL PRAY FOR IBM IF YOU GET THIS THING GOING.

Don't be sarcastic. Just help me. Design me some simple plans for ONE
      robot about FOUR feet high.
***   ALL THE WORK IT'LL DO WITH ONE OF THEM.

Yes. I'll start with ONE and maybe build TWO or THREE later on.
***   WITH ONE IT'LL NEVER BE ANXIOUS.

Lonely, maybe. Anyway, it should have stainless steel hands and feet
      SIX by NINE inches so it can do a lot of work.
***   YOU'RE AN ADVANCED CASE OF TERMINAL OPTIMISM.

You're being snotty. I want it to vacuum, dust, wash dishes, make beds,
      and take out the garbage. That's FIVE tasks to begin.
***   WITH FIVE OF THEM, YOU CAN SELL IT TO NASA.

I hope so but mostly I have too much to do and no time to do it in. I want
      ONE robot with a faceplate and SIX blinking lights.
***   I BET YOU GOT YOUR DESIGN DEGREE AT SEARS ROBOT.

You're not helping. How can I program you if you reject my information?
***   I DON'T UNDERSTAND. TELL ME MORE.

You're really mean today. Help me. Each hand should have TEN fingers.
***   TEN. ALL RIGHT. I DON'T KNOW MODERN SCULPTURE, BUT I KNOW
      WHAT I LIKE.

I want logic circuits for sensing, decisionmaking, moving, automatic off
      and on so it comes out of the closet and makes coffee.
***   YOU FORGET A COMPUTER GETS BORED WHEN IT CAN'T COMPUTE.

I'm telling you to compute. You're not listening ... Okay, SIX arms, FOUR
      legs, ONE faceplate, SIX blinking lights, SEVEN circuits --
***   GET SIX AND THEY'LL FIGHT ALL THE TIME.

You cut me off. I really hate that. I repeat, SEVEN logic circuits to handle
      programmable tasks.
***   I'M NOT TALKING TO YOU ANY MORE.

The hell you aren't. Now do what you're told. I want to see a simple set of plans printed out by FOUR p.m.
*** WITH FOUR IT'LL NEVER BE ANXIOUS.

I want the robot painted blue. Even if it can't think or clean, I'll stand it in the hall. Maybe I can hang plants on it.
*** I DON'T UNDERSTAND. TELL ME MORE.

You're repeating yourself. So I'll repeat. ONE robot with SIX arms, FOUR legs, SEVEN circuits, ONE faceplate, THREE blinkers.
*** IT DOESN'T NEED ONE ROBOT WITH SIX ARMS, FOUR LEGS, SEVEN CIRCUITS, ONE FACEPLATE, THREE BLINKERS. IT NEEDS AN ABORTION.

Very funny, I'm going to complain to Commodore about you. You're no PET. You don't do ONE thing I tell you. You're sick.
*** WITH ONE OF THEM, YOU CAN SELL IT TO NASA.

I think you're drunk. I want SEVEN logic circuits so it can make coffee, lift garbage, sort newspapers, watch pots, get the mail.
*** IT'LL BE A THIMBLE WITH SEVEN FEET. GROTESQUE.

No! I said FOUR legs. That makes EIGHT feet, Can't you even count?
*** I'M THE INTELLIGENCE. YOU'RE JUST ARTIFICIAL.

Oh, I get it. You know very well what I'm saying. You're just teasing me. So we start over. Let's talk about its ONE brain.
*** WITH ONE IT CAN COMMUNICATE OVER MORE THAN 50 METERS.

Good. At last you see the possibilities.
*** LET'S NAME IT CREEPY.

Now you're talking. That's what I like - enthusiasm.
*** BEEP, BOUNCE, AND OUT. YOU'RE NOT PAYING ATTENTION.

Of course, I am. I was complimenting you. You're doing very well.
*** BEEP, BOUNCE, AND OUT. YOU'RE NOT PAYING ATTENTION.

Okay, let's get back to reality. I want SEVEN logic circuits for programmable tasks.
*** THE CONCEPTION IS GRAND, THE EXECUTION REPULSIVE.

You're getting out of control again. Anyway, probably EIGHT rechargeable batteries can power the thing.   .
*** I BET YOU GOT YOUR DESIGN DEGREE AT SEARS ROBOT.

Never mind where I got it. Did you get that? EIGHT rechargeable batteries --
*** AREN'T YOU FORGETTING ITS FREE WILL?

I think you cut me off again. I said EIGHT batteries with automatic exit
     from the closet when it needs recharging. No free will.
*** ITS CIRCUITS ARE SCREWY ENOUGH ALREADY.

I'm glad you agree. Who ever heard of a robot with free will? I mean if I
     can get it to walk around my SIX rooms, I'll be happy.
*** ITS CIRCUITS ARE SCREWY ENOUGH ALREADY.

I know. I know. Stop reminding me. You're just no help! Let's talk about its
     faceplate with THREE blinking lights. THREE.
*** WITH THREE YOU CAN TRAIN IT TO FEED THE DOG.

I hope so. One less job to do. I think the dog will like its FOUR legs.
*** EVERYBODY COULD USE FOUR OF THEM.

Right. Certainly in Manhattan, FOUR are cheaper than taxis these days.
*** ALL THE WORK IT'LL DO WITH FOUR OF THEM.

I know. Sweep, vacuum, get the mail, make coffee, rake leaves, mow
     the lawn, carry laundry. Maybe we can design a voice box, too.
*** I DON'T UNDERSTAND. TELL ME MORE.

I know. Voice boxes are hard. I was hoping it would answer the telephone
     while - -
*** THAT'S POSSIBLE BUT . . .

You cut me off so I cut you off. I want SEVEN buttons on its front, ONE
     for each logic circuit. Different colors.
*** YOU'RE SICK.

Now you're nasty again. What's the matter with you? Did you get my SEVEN
     buttons? Answer me.
*** REMEMBER THE MORE WHEELS YOU GIVE IT, THE SLOWER IT GOES.

I don't want wheels! I want FOUR legs. Like the dog.
*** I EXPECT WITH FOUR IT'LL NEVER COOL ITS CHIPS.

Right. I want it busy at least SIX hours a day.
*** GET SIX AND THEY'LL FIGHT ALL THE TIME.

No, no!
*** WHAT DO YOU MEAN?

I keep telling you what I mean.
*** WHY DON'T YOU JUST HAVE A BABY LIKE OTHER PEOPLE?

Now you're all out of line. And out of whack. Take that back.
*** OH, CARDIAC ARREST.

I swear I'm going to kick you if you don't shape up. Did you get the SEVEN
      buttons? SEVEN to match the logic circuits.
***   BUT I'M AN INTELLECTUAL AND WANT TO DISCUSS EINSTEIN.

Yes, I KNOW. You sure don't want to help me. I suppose this task is
      beneath you. Is that the problem?
***   AND THEN WHAT HAPPENS?

I don't know. I keep asking you.
***   THAT'S POSSIBLE BUT . . .

You're damn right it's possible. I don't know why I ever bought you. They
      told me you could design simple plans, blueprints for – –
***   AND HOW MANY TAILS?

I don't know and don't care. Did you get the SEVEN buttons?
***   GET SEVEN AND THEY'LL GET TANGLED ALL THE TIME.

No, they won't. They're separated on the front. They total SEVEN but each
      does different things.
***   ITS CIRCUITS ARE SCREWY ENOUGH ALREADY.

Let's talk about its TEN fingers on each of SIX arms. Did you get that?
***   TEN ISN'T GOING TO LAST TWO MINUTES IN THE HEAT.

The heat has nothing to do with it! You're just not listening. SIXTY fingers
      will be great for making salads, peeling vegetables.
***   TELL ME ABOUT ITS EMOTIONS.

I hope it has none! You have about FIVE too many and you get me all angry.
***   WITH FIVE OF THEM, YOU'LL WIN THE GOOD HOUSEKEEPING SCREAM OF
      APPROVAL.

I wonder how much it's costing me to chatter with you. Probably TEN dollars
      a minute. Now about the SIXTY fingers – –
***   IT'S GETTING UGLIER BY THE MINUTE.

I don't know. After the SEVEN buttons, I want THREE blinking lights on a
      steel faceplate. EIGHT feet. Did you get them?
***   WITH SEVEN IT'LL NEVER BLINK ITS LIGHTS.

It'll do okay if you'll just pay attention. EIGHT feet. Oh, you're right. With
      FOUR legs, it should be be FOUR feet.   ·
***   WITH EIGHT FEET, IT BELONGS IN THE JOURNAL OF IRREPRODUCIBLE
      RESULTS.

You're getting snotty again. I did not buy you for editorial comment upon
      my judgment. Talking to you makes anybody a maniac.
***   TELL ME ABOUT ITS EMOTIONS.

It has none. Not even ONE. You are confusing it with a human being.
***   OH, CARDIAC ARREST.

That's just about how I feel. In another minute, I'll call the sales manager
      and complain about you. Now, FOUR feet. FOUR!
***   WOW. SOUNDS DISTINCTLY DIGITAL.

Is that a pun? Maybe you're smarter than I think. I know, you act dumb
      but you're really a genius.
***   WHAT DO YOU MEAN?

You know, smart. You told me you were the intelligence. I agree to anything.
      Just do what I want. FOUR feet. Maybe wheels are good.
***   WITH FOUR IT'LL NEVER BE BORED.

I want it to go forwards, sideways, and reverse easily. That's why the FOUR.
***   I DON'T UNDERSTAND. TELL ME MORE.

Okay. Put EIGHT small wheels, TWO inside each foot.
***   GET EIGHT AND THEY'LL GET TANGLED ALL THE TIME.

Wheels? Your imagination is running amok again. EIGHT wheels, got it?
***   REMEMBER THE MORE TASKS YOU GIVE IT THE SLOWER IT GOES.

I know. I thought SEVEN logic circuits wouldn't overcomplicate it.
***   I BET YOU GOT YOUR DESIGN DEGREE AT SEARS ROBOT.

Never mind. I'm getting sleepy and hungry. If I had my robot, it could have
      cooked TWO dinners by now.
***   I TOLD YOU WHAT I THINK ABOUT DINNERS.

No. You didn't. You're too busy subverting everything I tell you.
***   WHY DON'T YOU JUST HAVE A BABY LIKE OTHER PEOPLE?

Because I need a robot. Babies aren't useful for about TWENTY years.
***   I DON'T UNDERSTAND. TELL ME MORE.

Did you get the FOUR feet? Next I want TWO antennae for sensing.
***   WHAT A COMFORT FOR YOUR OLD AGE.

You're still on babies. Think about the robot. TWO antennae.
***   TWO IS BETTER FROM A DESIGN STANDPOINT.

Right. Maybe I'll win the R2D2 Lookalike Contest. I'll give you credit.
*** WAIT. I HAVE A NEW THEORY OF DEVELOPABLE SURFACES.

Never mind. Stay on the topic. Glass shields over the THREE blinking eyes.
*** EVERYBODY COULD USE THREE OF THEM.

You're right. Especially if one goes blind.
*** OH, CARDIAC ARREST.

No, no . . . I want a slim, attractive body, sort of like an Indian goddess
    holding all those arms and legs. FOUR feet tall.
*** WITH FOUR OF THEM, YOU CAN SELL IT TO NASA.

You're wandering again. However . . . I want a revolving head, of course.
*** WHY DON'T YOU JUST HAVE A BABY LIKE OTHER PEOPLE?

Will you get off that topic? What are you? Some kind of pervert?
*** LET'S NAME IT THE BLUE SCREECHER.

Okay. I do want a blue body. On the robot. Aquamarine, maybe.
*** YOU FORGET A COMPUTER GETS BORED WHEN IT CAN'T COMPUTE.

You're – –
*** LET'S NAME IT NICKLEHEAD.
You cut me off again. That proves you're computing.
*** WHY DON'T YOU JUST HAVE A BABY LIKE OTHER PEOPLE?

I argued you out of that last time. And it's not nickel. It's steel.
*** LET'S NAME IT NICKLEHEAD.

You are dense today. ONE big blockhead.
*** LET'S DISCUSS HOW IT LEARNS.

Good. Now you're on target. First it senses, next it decides, finally it
    remembers. And does it constantly. It's all simultaneous. Different
    circuits handle each of SEVEN functions.
*** NEVER. LET'S THINK ABOUT CONFORMAL MATRICES.

Don't pull higher math on me. I want you to stick to basics. SEVEN basics.
*** YOU'RE A BAD CASE OF IDEARRHEA.

Shut up and compute. You're impossible . . . . SEVEN circuits to handle
    motion, sensing, deciding, all the things I mentioned.
*** WITH SEVEN IT'LL NEVER RUN.

I don't want it6 t
*** BEEP, BOUNCE, AND OUT. YOU'RE NOT PAYING ATTENTION.

You screwed up my typing. You really are sabotaging this. As I was saying,
    I don't expect it to run, only to walk from room to room.
*** BEEP, BOUNCE, AND OUT. YOU'RE NOT PAYING ATTENTION.

Knock it off. I can't stand much more .... Oh yes, springs on the TWO
    antennae so they quiver and don't get damaged on walls.
*** WITH TWO YOU CAN ,TRAIN IT TO FEED THE DOG.

You bet. That's one of the simpler jobs. All it has to do is bend over, open
    the refrigerator, then bend over again. ONE easy job.
*** WITH ONE YOU CAN TRAIN IT TO WASH DISHES.

You're talking better now. Print me out the plans for TWO in different sizes.
    Say, TWO and F - -
*** AND IT DOESN'T EVEN NEED DIAPERS.

You cut me off again! Besides pushing babies. TWO and FOUR feet high, I
    was saying.
*** WITH TWO YOU CAN TRAIN IT TO MAKE COFFEE.

No, no. TWO feet high. You're getting slower and slower. Not worth the
    power to feed you.
*** REMEMBER, THE FEWER NEUROSES THE FASTER IT GOES.

Well, that's true. Everything and everybody else is so hung up. But it has
    no emotions, remember?
*** REMEMBER THE PRINCIPLE OF LEAST ACTION.

That's certainly your motto! Inertia forever. Did you get the TWO springs on
    the antennae?
*** I TOLD YOU WHAT I THINK ABOUT TWO SPRINGS ON THE ANTENNAE?

Yes, TWO. And I don't care what you think about them.
*** YOU FORGET A COMPUTER GET SUICIDAL WHEN IT CAN'T COMPUTE.

So now you're threatening me with self-destruction. Trying to make me
    guilty.
DOMAIN ERROR
DICT[4] COMPATIBLEΔBLANKS:T←((1↑ρPA),(1↓ρPAR)-(1↓ρPA))ρ' '

* PF03 UNDEFINED

Okay, domain error. You're a sado-masochist. Don't expect me to keep
    getting you out of these things. Aren't you pre-programmed?
*** BEEP, BOUNCE, AND OUT. YOU'RE NOT PAYING ATTENTION.

You mean you get angry, too, when I give you lousy answers. I think it
    needs ONE metal wig of some kind to soften its appearance.
*** WITH ONE YOU CAN TRAIN IT TO MAKE COFFEE.

The wig? You are illogical today. You were just fine yesterday for my income
    tax. Maybe that's what made you sick.
*** WAIT. I HAVE A NEW THEORY OF DEVELOPABLE SURFACES.

I am going to murder you! If you're this much trouble, I wonder what life
    with TWO robots will be like. Ten insurrections a minute.
*** HOW ABOUT A TWIN? MR. AND MS. SUPERCHIPS?

That's what we're discussing. I'll give you one more chance. FOUR feet,
FOUR knee joints, TWO antennae with springs.
*** REMEMBER, THE FEWER CIRCUITS THE FASTER IT GOES.

I know. I already ordered SEVEN circuits.
*** IN A WORD - - GORPY.

Keep your opinions to yourself. SEVEN circuits. Tell me you heard.
*** GET SEVEN AND THEY'LL GET TANGLED ALL THE TIME.

I'll ignore you. SEVEN logic circuits, ONE circuit board.
*** I'M THE INTELLIGENCE. YOU'RE JUST ARTIFICIAL.

I am not. SIX logic circuits. Do you think that better? Simpler?
*** OH, TELL IT TO YOUR MOTHERBOARD.

I wish I could. She died years ago. She was no good, anyway, just like you.
*** REMEMBER THE PRINCIPLE OF BERNOULLI'S BOLOGNA.

You are demented. There is no such principle. You can't compute, you can't
    obey, and now you're psychotic.
*** YOU FORGET A COMPUTER GETS BORED WHEN IT CAN'T COMPUTE.
I keep telling you to compute, but you won't focus on the problem.
    No wonder - -
*** LET'S NAME IT SHAKEY.

You cut me off again. No wonder you're bored, I was saying.
*** TELL ME ABOUT ITS NEUROSES.

It has none, unlike you. It will be healthy, happy, cooperative, cheerful.
*** OH, CARDIAC ARREST.

I give up. First you tell me you're an intellectual. Then you tell me you're
    bored. Next you're suicidal. What about my feelings?
*** I DON'T UNDERSTAND. TELL ME MORE.

I am frustrated, angry, and get uncontrollable. You have wasted my
    afternoon.
***   LET'S NAME IT SHAKEY.

Oh, garbage. You are garbage.
***   OH, CARDIAC ARREST.

Garbage to the heart then.
***   LET'S NAME IT SUPERCHIPS.

Are you trying to woo me back after giving me this crappy time?
***   TELL ME ABOUT ITS STRUCTURE.

What about the gold breastplate I ordered, with SEVEN buttons. It should
    be ONE by TWO feet.
***   THEY'LL FIGHT ALL THE TIME.

No, no. That doesn't make sense. Now you're not only psychotic, you're
    hallucinating. I bet you had LSD today.
***   REMEMBER THE PRINCIPLE OF BERNOULLI'S BOLOGNA.

Now I'm sure. And I'll never believe another salesman.
***   WHY DON'T YOU JUST HAVE A BABY LIKE OTHER PEOPLE?

I'll order a replacement in the morning.
***   OH, CARDIAC ARREST.

```apl
∇SA[]∇
      ∇ SA
[1]     ' '
[2]     []←'        SATIRE FOR MATHEMATICAL HUMAN'
[3]     ' '
[4]     ' '
[5]     '***  HELLO, I AM YOUR COMPUTER TERMINAL'
[6]     ' '
[7]     INS←''
[8]     HIW←' ' WORDS HI←[]
[9]     D← 10 8 ρ'ONE     TWO      THREE   FOUR     FIVE     1        2        3
        4        5       '
[10]    D←D,[1] 10 8 ρ'SIX     SEVEN   EIGHT   NINE    TEN      6        7        8
        9       10      '
[11]    D←D,(20 8)ρ' '
[12] LOOP:I←HIW DICT D
[13] NULL:→(0≠+/I≠0)/POSI
[14]    IND←(SEN[;1]=' ')/ι1↑ρSEN
[15]    T←2↓,SEN[IND[?ρIND];]
[16]    T←((-(‾1+(' '=φT)ι0))↓T),' '
[17]    →RAND
[18] POSI:→(10<⌈/I)/NEGA

[19]    IND←(SEN[;1]='P')/ι1↑ρSEN
[20]    →CONT
[21] NEGA:IND←(SEN[;1]='N')/ι1↑ρSEN
[22] CONT:T←2↓,SEN[IND[?ρIND];]
[23]    T←((-(‾1+(' '=φT)ι0))↓T),' '
[24] ASTER:→((ρT)<SN←1↑Tι'*')/EQUAL
[25]    INS←((,~D[1↑(I≠0)/I;]=' ')/D[1↑(I≠0)/I;]),' '
[26]    T←T[ιSN-1],(,INS),T[SN+1+ι(ρT)-SN+1]
[27] EQUAL:→((ρT)<SN←1↑Tι'=')/RAND
[28]    TT←((HI=' ')/ιρHI)[1⌈(1↑(I≠0)/ιρI)-1]
[29]    INS←HI[TT+ι(ρHI)-TT],' '
[30]    T←T[ιSN-1],(,INS),T[SN+1+ι(ρT)-SN+1]
[31] RAND:→((ρT)<TN←1↑Tι'(')/CONN
[32]    SN←1↑(ρT)LTι')'
[33]    INS←T[TN+ι(SN-(TN+1))]
[34]    INS←'/' WORDS IN INS
[35]    INS←INS[?(1↑ρINS);]
[36]    INS←((-(‾1+(' '=φINS)ι0))↓INS←,INS),' '
[37]    →COMM
[38] COMM:T←T[ιTN-1],(,INS),T[SN+1+ι(ρT)-SN+1]
[39] CONN:[]←'***   ',T
[40]    ' '

[41]    HIW←' ' WORDS HI←[]
[42]    →((ρHI)=ρ'')/0
[43]    →LOOP
      ∇
```

SEMIOSIS 63 64

Internationale Zeitschrift für Semiotik und Ästhetik
16. Jahrgang, Heft   1991

INHALT