TOO CLOSE By Josh Jahn

AN electric fence surrounds a beat up building. A Mercedes Benz is parked in the small parking lot. The building was once an old watch shop. It went out of business over forty years ago. It was bought a few years ago by a scientist. When it was bought, it was covered in graffiti and the windows were smashed. Although no one ever got in; there were iron bars over all the windows. It was in the outskirts of the city. It now has new windows, a new paintjob, and a high-wattage electric fence. Despite the refurbishment of the building, it still looks old and beat up. No one, not even the government, knows what goes on inside the building. The scientist installed a giant, extremely high-tech satellite dish on the top of the building. Once in a while you can see the dish move around, pointing to different positions in the sky. It turns out this scientist sold his home and now lives in this old building. He only leaves to get groceries, here and there. He has no social life, except talking to other like-minded scientist on MSN. It is 3:30 in the morning. Some teens are loitering around the fence, smoking, keeping their distance.”I’m telling you,” A teen pauses to puff a breath of smoke, “This guy is a total nut job.” the other teen shrugs. “You just never know.” Inside the building it is dim and cool. It’s almost dark. There is a musty smell in the air. A pipe from the ceiling leaks into a bucket. The building used to have rooms in it. They were all knocked out. The building is now open concept. On one side of the building is a small bed with a sleeping bag and a small leather pillow. Under his bed he keeps his small wardrobe. On his bed rests a shiny piano black Dell laptop. Beside the bed was a nightstand with a pink lava lamp, and an alarm clock. It reads 3:35 AM. Beside the nightstand was a medium sized treadmill and beside that a workout mat with twenty and thirty pound weights on it. On the opposite side of the room there is a dusty, massive computer, five feet tall and three feet thick. There are six other normal computers attached to it .Attached to all this are two 27” plasma monitors and two printers. The floor and the desk are filled with wires and papers, papers filled with data and equations, maps of the stars. A tall, extremely fit man sat typing furiously at the keyboard. There was the low hum of the computers. The man looked as if he had not shaven for a few weeks and had bloodshot eyes. He seemed a bit older than middle-aged. He continued typing. It seemed he was looking for something. An obsession he had for most of his life. There were also papers all over the floor. Every once in a while he printed something out, more data. Between the computers and the bed was a small cubicle. This was the bathroom. On the other side of this there was a door, a fridge, and a kitchenette that had not been cleaned for weeks. An open box of Pop Tarts lay open by the sink and the entire building floor was full of empty Red Bull cans. The walls were covered in maps of the stars and galaxies and university degrees and awards. His eyes suddenly grew wide. His right hand and index finger shot in the air.”I got it!” For another fifty minuets he sat typing crazily at the keyboard. He hit enter. After a few minutes of loading the computers made a loud beeping sound. “No....it can’t be....” he breathed. He jumped almost three feet. His chair went flying. He cried for joy. “This is it!!” he exclaimed. He had tears of happiness in his eyes.”This is it!” he repeated. He kissed the computer monitor.”My life’s work is finally complete! I’ll be famous and rich!” He laughed joyfully. The computer monitor read “ALIEN LIFE FORM FOUND.” He heard a sound behind him. He turned around. There was a man in a dark black suite standing by his nightstand. He had on dark glasses. The scientist reached into his white coat and pulled out a small silver revolver. “How did you get in here and what do you want?” the scientist shot in a loud tone. No answer. Something about this man was....strange. The revolver in the scientist hand started shaking.”Get out!” the scientist yelled, “I don’t want to hurt anyone.” The man replied, “You just got to close, Professor. It ends tonight.” The man reached inside his suite and pulled out a powerful handgun. The scientist cursed and fired the revolver. The bullet went through the man and hit his alarm clock. The alarm clock blew to pieces. It was as if the man was a hologram. The scientist was in a cold sweat. He shouted, “What do you want!?!” The man smirked. “Your life.” The man took aim with the handgun. “Goodbye, Dr. Avory.” The scientist screamed, “Nooooooooooooooooo!!!!” The man fired. The bullet ripped through the scientist chest, blood splattering all over the monitors. The lifeless body of Dr. James Avory fell to the ground. The man’s voice suddenly got deeper.”My apologies, human.” The man then tore off his suit to reveal a transparent alien body. Its alien organs were all visible. It took off its human mask to reveal a clear alien head with three eyes. It’s blue and green brain was visible. “It is done.” The alien suddenly disappeared. Above the building, the alien was beamed to a other-worldly spacecraft. It was hovering over the building with its invisible shields on. The alien joined its shipmates and said, “Are we ready?” The other aliens nodded. “Indeed. We must destroy all evidence.” One of the aliens pressed a red button on a control panel full of millions of buttons. A blue laser fired directly at the building and the building exploded in a massive mushroom explosion. The alien sighed as fire trucks and emergency crews surrounded the fiery mess.”Humans just get too close sometimes.” They shifted into hyper drive and blasted off.

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